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ABSTRACT

The training of preschool facilitators is considered in the context of the new emphases on preschool education in developing countries. The term "facilitator" refers to anyone who contributes to a young child's learning in any situation. Components of the contextual framework include: (1) emerging concepts of early childhood education; (2) the learning environment; (3) preschool and home; and (4) basic considerations in personnel training. Discussion focuses on general design issues and frameworks, rather than a specific model. Special emphasis is given to the training of facilitators concerned with the educational development of 3- to 6-year-olds. The importance of the home learning environment is a pervasive theme of the text. An introductory chapter is followed by Chapter II, which covers resource frameworks for designing preschool facilitator training, the process of establishing facilitator competency profiles, a theory of teaching, the learning environment, performance analysis, and tasks and competencies. In Chapter III, training modes are discussed in terms of general characteristics, a short course design, and a comprehensive training system. Chapter IV concerns special design issues related to assignments for the trainee facilitator and alternative modes for using theory in training. Chapter V outlines the family's role as a partner in preschool education. (RH)

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Digest No. 5

Preparing to Help the Young Child Learn and Grow: Training ECCE Personnel

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A. **by Veda Prakasha**

Digest No. I — *Our Future is in our Children: The case for Early Childhood Care and Education*

Digest No. II — *Battling Costs for Quality and Quantity: Emerging Responses in Early Childhood Care and Education*

Digest No. III — *Zero through Six: Learning and Growing. What we Know of the very Young Child*

Digest No. IV — *Towards an Open Learning Environment for the Young Child: Some Principles, Practices and Issues in Curriculum Planning*

B. **by Jayananda Ratnaike**

Digest No. V — *Preparing to Help the Young Child Learn and Grow: Training ECCE Personnel*

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J. **by Bushra Jabre**

Digest No. XV — *Education and Primary Health Care (being processed)*

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Digest No. 5

Preparing to Help the Young Child Learn and Grow: Training ECCE Personnel

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PREFACE

The following six Digests are designed to serve as a self-contained set of manuals specially for programming personnel in the field of Early Childhood Care and Education:

I. Our Future is in Our Children: The Case for Early Childhood Care and Education; by Veda Prakasha.

II. Battling Costs for Quality and Quantity: Emerging Responses in Early Childhood Care and Education; by Veda Prakasha.

III. Zero Through Six: Learning and Growing; What We Know of the Very Young Child; by Veda Prakasha.

IV. Towards an Open Learning Environment for the Young Child: Some Principles, Practices and Issues in Curriculum Planning; by Veda Prakasha.

V. Preparing to Help the Young Child Learn and Grow: Training ECCE Personnel; by Jayananda Ratnaike.

VI. A Guide to Facilities for Early Childhood Care and Education; by David J. Vickery.

They are equally useful to teacher educators engaged in training and orienting ECCE personnel as well as to curriculum developers, supervisors, heads of institutions and other implementers of ECCE programmes.

In addition, Digest VII: Education of and by the Family - Practical Guidelines for Establishing Family Educational Units by Cornelia Quarti discusses an innovative approach to ECCE by establishing Family Educational Units to take charge of the role which a family ordinarily plays in the overall development of the young child. Another document, specially designed to cater for the ECCE practitioners is Digest XIV: A Manual for Teachers of Young Children and Other ECCE Personnel by Edith H. Grotberg.

The Unit expresses its gratitude to Mr. J. Ratnaike, Educational Adviser in Unesco Regional Office for Education in Asia and the Pacific, Bangkok, Thailand, for having contributed Digest V to its documentation in Early Childhood Care and Education and thus shared with our readership his insights emerging from his long experience in programming ECCE activities in the Asia and Pacific Region. A major part of this experience comes from his personal involvement in relief camps for Kampuchean refugees on the Thai border. It is particularly significant that Mr. Ratnaike prepared this document during his leisure hours entirely as a labour of love and, in fact, met the secretarial and other incidental costs himself.

A word of explanation is necessary on the term "Facilitator" used throughout in it. Mr. Ratnaike considers that "Facilitator" would be preferable to "Personnel" or "Teachers" when we discuss ECCE in view of the complexity of teaching/learning situations of formal, informal and non-formal nature connected with ECCE and the wide variety of personnel who are engaged in them. Thus the term "facilitator", as its dictionary meaning would connote, is taken to embrace everyone who is making a contribution to a young child's learning in whatever setting--from parents and siblings to teachers of formal pre-schools.

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Education Sector

18 April 1985

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

THE CONTEXT

The training of facilitators for pre-school education is considered in this Digest in the context of the new emphases on pre-school education in developing countries. The following issues are components of this contextual framework :

(a) Emerging Concepts of Early Childhood Education

- The pre-school must be a joyous place, where the physical, mental, health, nutritional, social, aesthetic and moral development of the child is facilitated.

> *The development of children of pre-school age is not confined to any one dimension, such as health or nutrition or education. Integrated programmes for the pre-school child covering all domains of development are required.*

- The overwhelming importance of a pre-school programme, is for children from disadvantaged environments, the most vulnerable of populations in a nation. This emphasis arises from stated priorities in national socio-economic development policies and plans for enhancing social justice, aside from the imperatives of the Universal Rights of the Child.

- Derived from this emphasis, is the importance of a conscious cognitive orientation to pre-school education design. In this domain, the disadvantaged child shows particular deficits.

> *Cognition is perceived not from a narrow viewpoint of formal actions, such as in programmes restricted to the preparation for primary school, but from a broad behavioural viewpoint of intellectual perceiving, processing, and functioning.*

While the orientation may be cognitive, other domains *can* and *should* also be developed simultaneously. Also the developmental learning episodes in other domains may be mobilized effectively to facilitate cognitive development.

> Aesthetic appreciation of rythm and beat may be coupled with symbolizing the rythm in symbol form, such as long and short lines.

- The importance of social development in the child is also stressed. Apart from the "social" aspects, there are other significant developmental aspects of the child that are simultaneously supported through competencies in social development.

> The gradual movement from centration to decentration, an important developmental change in children, is facilitated through several interactions. The movement itself provides the child with the capacity to develop from the concrete and from perceptions that are egocentric, to the ability to imagine relations within the confines of concrete experiencing and then further into the beginnings of symbolic capability. An important modality for social development is the mixing of age groups in pre-schools. This provides for enhanced competencies of both the older and the younger children.

Inter-learning flows as it does in the natural home learning environment of many rural peoples. The older child becomes more concretely aware of actions and operations she is explaining to the younger child. The older child improves her feeling of usefulness, competence, potency and responsibility. The younger child has an opportunity to experience concretely, models or stages of development and skills attainment. Both children have opportunities to move away from egocentricism.

(b) Learning Environment

Optimal learning by children of pre-school ages takes place when children are permitted to play, explore and discover actively and spontaneously, with the emphasis on learning rather than on teaching. Opportunities in this open learning system have to be present to permit the child to become a competent person, with positive self-image, and with pride of self-achievement.

- The home learning environment provides signals regarding culturally harmonious learning styles such as demonstration learning, peer learning, cross-age group learning, self-learning.

Children need to develop as independent learners, with the ability to know, to learn to know, and to know that they know.

Self-owning of knowledge and competencies is seen well, when the child realizes the relationship between what the child knows, and the choices and options that knowledge produces in the various possible uses of the knowledge.

Thus "where else" can be an important chant that may be used in pre-school education to cue the child frequently to seek situations where everything that is learned is attempted to be recognized in situations other than where it was learned, and applied in these situations as well.

- The child learns in a *holistic manner* in any place, at any time and at the *individual pace* unique to each child.

The pre-school child of any culture or social background is an incredibly able learner.

The facilitator plays a fiduciary role in regard to the above, and creates and manages an open, responsive, active learning environment, and supports, stimulates and guides the child towards becoming a self-motivated competent person.

(c) Pre-school and Home

- The pre-school is *but one of the agents of society* being mobilized to serve as an educational and socializing mediator in accordance with the values, expectations, and objectives of a nation.

It is a relatively recently contrived agent, intervening at a defined stage of development of the child. It is recent when compared with the home learning environment

which has been used for the education and socialisation of the child from primeval times.

A good pre-school is an extension of the child's home, and the home becomes an extension of the pre-school. The pre-school and the home together form a seamless education and development progression of the child.

- Potential learning environments that are culture specific, culture harmonious, and of superior quality, exist in the *poorest and the most disadvantaged homes*, but may remain *un- or under-utilised.*

The learning environments of the home may be mobilised for constructive use in the pre-school, and through parental involvement and education, these constructive uses may be continued in the home.

- *Deficits* also occur in the home learning environment of vast numbers of children under poverty conditions. The pre-school learning environment has to provide for meeting these deficits and for enhancing the home learning environment too, so that *continuity* persists between the pre-school and the home.

- *Environmental circumstances* can and do *affect* the *development rate* of a child. This is especially so with a child of a disadvantaged environment.

A child deprived of a substantial portion of the variety of stimuli that the child is maturationally capable of responding to, is likely to be deficient in the competencies required for learning. Changes in these environmental circumstances are essential to "force" the accommodative modification of schemata. This is as fundamental a basis for development, as maturation is.

- The greater the variations in situations the child has to accommodate behaviour structures, the more enriched, mobile and differentiated they become.

The more variation in reality the child copes with under the child's own volition, the greater the child's capacity to cope. Such active interaction between the child and the environment forms the basis for the series of development stages through which the child progresses.

On these are built the later higher order abilities like problem solving and logical processing. When the disadvantaged child has acquired no means to develop inate individual potential, potential as such is a sadly worthless commodity.

- The pre-school education systems in most developing countries are *complex* because of their variations, even though the coverage is small.

While urban affluent populations have a pre-school service which is usually modelled on Western pre-schools, rural areas and other disadvantaged environments have a variety of models ranging from comprehensive day care centres which function around eight hours a day; half-day centres functioning for four

hours; "minimum" centres functioning for two hours a day; "classes" attached to primary schools which may cater to the age group just prior to entering the primary school or to the age group 3-6 years and may function for the whole period of the primary school daily hours or less; informal home-based pre-schools where a care-giver from the community takes responsibility for the neighbours' children for two or more hours.

These scenarios have corresponding competency implications for the training of pre-school facilitators. The above also emphasis the need for a variety of modes for the training programmes

(d) Training of Personnel : Some Basic Considerations

- The *systems for training pre-school teachers* are themselves *varied*, and may range from post-graduate courses at Faculties of Education or Home Economics, to first degree courses, to non-degree diploma courses, of one or more years of training; to very short courses or orientations of a few weeks, often of an ad hoc kind and usually just prior to being placed at a pre-school centre in a disadvantaged area.

The many other personnel associated with the implementation of pre-school programmes have little or no practical training.

The system of pre-school education needs to provide for the training of all the significant personnel involved. This includes at least the pre-school

facilitators, the trainers, the the supervisors, the administrators, the planners.

- The *training* of pre-school facilitators needs to be viewed as a *lengthy process* rather than a "single shot" event, whether the initial training extended over one, two or three years at formal institutions, or was of much shorter duration at less formal decentralized centres.

The components of pre-service, on-going in-service and continuing education have to be interlinked into a comprehensive long-term training programme for pre-school facilitators. Included in such training would be the in-situ training done during visits of competent supervisors of pre-school education.

- The urgency for expanding pre-school programmes, in the wake of the renewed enthusiasm for service to little children arising from such massive national efforts as the universalization of the first level of education, demands a *large number* of pre-school facilitators.

Thus short-term initial training coupled with on-the-job and other modalities of in-service training at decentralized levels, becomes a necessary feature of the training of facilitators.

- The experience of practically all developing countries indicates that the best of designs and the best of facilitities are *not sufficient conditions* for the effective implementation of pre-school programmes.

A well organized and stimulating environment together with a skilled, sensitive, supportive adult facilitating the learning process, seem to provide for the best advances in learning at pre-school.

THE SCOPE

While emphasizing the unquestioned importance of integrated development of the whole child, the Digest focuses essentially on the training of facilitators in regard to the educational development of the child, due to space limitations.

The most vitally needed facilitator competencies to support the development of the health and nutritional status of the child, have to be added to the facilitator competencies related to education, in any training programme for facilitators. The training of pre-school facilitators has to reflect the fact that the pre-school provides an integrated service to the whole child.

Methodological issues, design strategies and emphases discussed in this Digest, have implications in regard to the training of facilitators in improving the health and nutritional status of pre-school children as well.

The validity for the separation made between children of "creche age" (usually 0-3 years) and "pre-school (3-6 years) even when historical justifications have been made, has been seriously questioned. In terms of service to the development of the child, the separation is not only invalid conceptually, but has generally proved to be of great dis-service to the children themselves, especially those from disadvantaged environments.

The training designs for facilitators for creches must have a great degree of overlap with those for pre-schools, especially in terms of the learning characteristics of active, joyful, exploratory, creative, holistic and individualized learning.

To this extent, the document covers the age group 0-3 years. There are, however, very unique and significant competencies in regard to facilitating the development of children of ages 0-3 years, which require special attention. Space does not permit covering these highly important competencies, in this document. The primary focus in this document is the training of facilitators who will work in pre-schools with children of ages 3-6 years.

All personnel involved in the pre-school education system require training. The principles of design discussed in this document have considerable application and transfer value to the training of all such personnel, though the focus of the document is facilitator training.

The importance of the home learning environment, is a fundamental and pervasive theme that runs through this document.

This Digest discusses only general design issues and frameworks for training pre-school facilitators, rather than a specific detailed model, considering the great variety of

scenarios in the pre-school education systems in the countries of the region, which would signal different specific models for the training of pre-school facilitators. In addition to the Introduction, this Digest covers the following :

Chapter II : Resource Frameworks for Designing Training

Chapter III : Training Modes

Chapter IV : Special Design Issues

Chapter V : The Family as Partners.

CHAPTER II

RESOURCE FRAMEWORKS

RESOURCE FRAMEWORKS FOR DESIGNING PRE-SCHOOL FACILITATOR TRAINING

The plethora of training designs pushes the designer of pre-school facilitator training programmes to seek "fundamental" and "systematic" resource frameworks to aid in the task, specially as many of these designs have been criticized for being ineffective in the context of the realities of the field situations.

The claimed success of COMPETENCY-BASED TEACHER TRAINING PROGRAMMES over the last decade makes this approach an attractive source for supporting the development of training designs.

If the required facilitator competencies can be established, then there is undoubtedly, an impeccable logic that can lead to superior training programme designs. There are, no doubt, many paths to identifying facilitator competencies. Among them, the following are possible paths. (For paths other than those indicated below, too, analyses similar to those below may be made.)

ESTABLISHING FACILITATOR COMPETENCY PROFILES : THREE CONVERGING PATHS

Teacher effectiveness in general, though an area that has been worked on by researchers over a long period of time, unfortunately still remains an ambiguous concept at all levels of education, and particularly at the level of pre-school education, where many of the tasks and competencies are yet to be verbalized and defined with the specificity required to describe effectiveness.

Nevertheless, in all countries, effective teachers and facilitators exist, and have been recognized as such, by both education administrators and managers, and, perhaps, more importantly, by the children and their parents.

To design training programmes for facilitators at pre-school level, such prerequisite data, as distinguishing characteristics of competent facilitators, the most appropriate personality traits of facilitators, the effective facilitator behaviours that maximize learning opportunities for children, are singularly lacking in a systematic and empirically tested form.

Most of the data available at the moment can only lead to speculative suggestions. At best, concensus may be obtained in terms of merely broad categories such as :

i. sets of general *competencies* and *attributes* which make up the techniques of facilitating relating to the methods and strategies used by the facilitator to attempt to accomplish learning goals; and

ii. a collection of generalized facilitating *styles*, referring to *personality traits* and *attitudes* and *values*, which interact with the various facilitating *techniques* used by the facilitator. Even this concensus is difficult to use in design or investigation, since the separation of facilitating techniques from facilitating styles, becomes an arbitrary or an artificial excerise in the context of active pre-school classroom learning. Furthermore, accurate

fitting of either a given facilitating technique or a given facilitating style to a given specific learning situation in a pre-school, is rarely possible in practice.

Some signals, of course, are available from fundamental frameworks, such as the stages of development of young children, the manner in which young children learn, and the conditions that foster learning in young children. Thus the facilitator's competencies derived from such frameworks would need to be, for example, ones which :

i. provide an environment structured to offer to individual children integrated learning opportunities of a seemingly incidental type which is open and which provides for exploration;

ii. permit, encourage, stimulate and support child activity as a major vehicle for learning;

iii. provide for relevance and quality of content, taking off from, and extending, the competencies the child already possesses, especially those acquired in the home learning environment;

iv. provide for contiquity, practice, reinforcement, continuity, generalization and discrimination, to stabilize acquired competencies of the child;

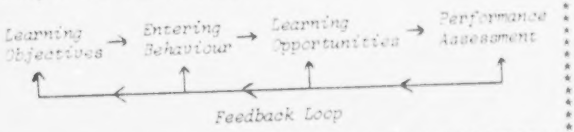
v. provide for designed adult-child interactions, which are integrated into the environment and structured to offer learning opportunities to the child of a joyful, incidental, open and exploratory kind.

However, while a considerable array of theoretical and empirical signals are available for learning theory and the basic conditions of learning, a unified theory of learning, which explains the conditions under which learning does and does not take place, and which applies to all learners, to all learning tasks, and to all situations, in and out of school, is not available at present. Thus, from this angle too, unambiguous specifications for facilitator training, at the level of specific competencies, is not yet feasible.

THEORY OF TEACHING

Specifications for the training of facilitators may be derived from a THEORY OF TEACHING. Such a theory should be able to explain how teachers behave; why they behave as they do; and with what effects. Such a theory should apply to all teachers associated with the learning of all learners, in all subject matter areas, in all situations where teaching-learning occurs, including the situation of open learning in pre-school where teaching is to a large extent creating opportunities for self-learning. Unfortunately, again, no such theory of teaching is available as yet. In some education circles, it has even been argued for some time that far too many kinds of processes, of behaviour and of activity, exist in "teaching" to be encompassed by a single theory. 1/ (It should be pointed out, however, that Einstein did achieve a unified theory when previously it was pointed out, similarly, that too many factors were present to be conjoined in a single theory.)

In the absence of a grand theory, the next possible source is a "teaching model", which can be suitably adapted to meet the requirements of "teaching" as facilitating open learning in pre-school and which, though not generalized and explanatory, yet suggests how the several components are interrelated. One such commonly used model, 2/ *given as an example is the following :*



1/ For example, Gage, N.L., "The Theories of Teaching" in N.L. Gage (ed) Handbook of Research on Teaching, 1964, Chicago: Rand McNally & Co., p. 27.

2/ After Glaser, R., "Psychology and Instructional Technology" in Training Research and Education, Ed. R. Glaser, Pittsburg: University Pittsburg Press (1962).

If this model is taken as the basis for facilitator training, the curriculum for facilitator training in the context of the open learning pre-schools would then be the knowledge, techniques, skills and attitudes required for :

- developing learning objectives;
- analyzing entering behaviour;
- matching the appropriate procedures for facilitating learning to both the requirements of the learning objectives and the strengths and weaknesses present in entering behaviour; and,
- assessing performance, followed by using the feedback from this assessment to improve the learning objectives.

However, in practice, when resolution is made to the level of particular competencies required for each of the components of the model in real situations, the lack of sufficient theory in each category and the lack of unambiguous empirical data become, once again, problems, as in all the other alternatives indicated above.

Other signals for training can also emanate from practical needs such as dealing with particular attributes of the learner population, for example, of those from disadvantaged environments. (This has been referred to as entering behaviour in the "teaching" model.) In this case, the facilitator competencies would be those that would permit the mobilisation for learning of the following types of strengths the disadvantaged child brings into the pre-school:

- *high degree of psycho-motor competence;*
- *high degree of survival skills;*
- *high degree of responsibility, reliability, self-reliance and independence necessary for the performance of essential tasks for survival;*
- *emotional stability and resilience and high flexibility in social relationships in the home milieu;*

- *high competence for peer interaction and learning;*
- *high sense of peer solidarity;*
- *high self-image in some situations (together with low self-image in others).*

Similarly, the facilitator competencies would be those that would assist in neutralising or compensating for, identified weaknesses of such populations, such as the following :

- *inability to operate effectively in the standard language;*
- *inability to use certain more complex levels of discourse, and expressive, reflective and interpretive modes of language;*
- *shortfalls in cognitive functioning which are necessary for formal learning;*
- *shortfalls in social behaviours necessary for learning in the pre-school.*

Either mobilising the strengths or compensating for or neutralising the weakness, calls for learning/facilitating activities that may be specified in terms of these strengths or weaknesses. These activities would then imply facilitator competencies, both in respect of facilitating techniques and in terms of facilitating styles. These competencies when identified may now form the basis of a facilitator training programme.

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Another path which is in the realm of empirical and pragmatic approaches, is to provide for a range definition of the ANTICIPATED LEARNING ENVIRONMENT, and use this as a backdrop to derive facilitator competencies, and from those the facilitator training design. It has been found useful to retain this "learning environment backdrop" against which

competencies being trained for and the performance of facilitators may be checked. The following leads to a sample of such a range definition of a learning environment for pre-school children.

One outstanding aspect that will determine the nature of the learning environment is the learning process exhibited by children during the pre-school ages.

Some of the significant characteristics are the following:

- *The child learns best through actively doing and manipulating. The child is not basically a passive learner. Incorporation of active learning with spontaneous play in developmental sequences is undoubtedly the most effective learning strategy for the child.*
- *The child learns at all times and not at pre-set times only. The child learns in all places and not in any given space. The learning is continuous and informal.*
- *Each child is unique although all children pass through identifiable stages in learning as well as in other developmental aspects. Each child, however, grows and develops in his or her own characteristic way. The learning of the child is individual, at each child's pace, style and direction, and the child's learning involves the child's total being at any given time.*

Together with the above, the various attributes such as the entering characteristics of the learners, the intended learning outcomes, have to be summed up to develop the learning environment. A learning environment that will keep learners joyfully engaged in the effective growth of all their developmental domains has to be developed by using a great deal of practical experience and widsom. Theoretical frameworks alone are, as yet, too crude to provide more than general guidelines.

The nature of the learning environment may be governed by general characteristics such as the following, guided pervasively by the condition that real life environments together with contrived situations in proportions and times appropriate to a given learning/teaching situation, have superior capacities for fostering learning than purely artificial environments or purely real life environments:

- *quality, relevance and quantity of content of the intervention from the standpoint of designed inputs needed to foster total child development;*
- *integrated holistic approaches and strategies taking the total development of the child as the basis of the design for the intervention;*
- *planned sequences for elimination of perceived weaknesses and for making use of perceived strengths, providing opportunities for the practice and reinforcement of learning;*
- *reinforcement of aspects of development other than education, through other institutions and services touching the child, such as health, nutrition, guidance.*

In more specific terms, such a learning environment would show attributes such as the following :

- The environment would have a heavy activity orientation. A choice of a large variety of activities will be available, to widen the scope of the child's experiences and to cater to all aspects of her development. Many of these activities could be those the child is already skilled in, from home learning, but now used for further development of learning.

- The environment would encourage much manipulation and interaction with objects, materials, equipment and people, leading to self-discovery of knowledge. Again, culturally familiar objects and materials would form a major resource for learning. Coming from the home environment, these are usually "low" or "no" cost items, and they lend themselves to mobilizing activities the child is familiar with, for further development.

- The environment would provide the child with a carefully designed sequence of learning activities, suitably graded for different age levels, leading up to readiness for formal schooling. These activities would include oral language development and a broad range of cognitively stimulating preparatory experiences (different from reading, writing and arithmetic).

- The environment would provide opportunities for the child to equip herself with identified competencies to cope with the immediate environment, like communication skills, and skills needed to look after one's own personal needs (including those required, for example, to deal with the hazards of living near a busy traffic area, etc., that may arise as a result of rapid social changes), leading to self-reliance and independence. The self-reliance developed in the home learning environment would need to be reinforced and extended, in the context of recognizing and mobilizing the strengths the child already has, and then extended and reinforced back in the home learning environment.

- The environment would show clear evidence of the recognition that children vary widely in their ability to learn in different circumstances, and in the development of their capabilities, and ensure an individual pace of development for the child, with opportunities for child-to-child co-operation, rather than of competition.

- The environment would provide for the series of progressive "mini-stages" which are present within any given developmental stage of a child.

The design would provide learning sequences which will consciously establish the pre-requisite competencies for all these mini-stages.

- The environment, for reasons of providing experience to the child in using "adult models" for such aspects as language development; and for other social and emotional development reasons, would mobilize the help of older siblings and adults in and outside the child's family as an integral part of the design. In particular, "care taking" siblings would be involved in these programmes.

- The environment would prepare for the continuity of intervention beyond the pre-school into the home through the use of care givers in the pre-school and through parental orientation and education.

PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS

Yet another approach involves the ANALYSES OF PERFORMANCE of facilitators in the field acknowledged to be competent, so as to derive the effective tasks they undertake, and the competencies they exhibit in executing these tasks. Such analyses would also produce profiles which should be broadly convergent, though not identical, with those derived from the determinants indicated above, such as theoretical bases of child learning or attributes of the learner population. But the competency of a facilitator measured as "learner gain" need not, in practice, provide immediately usable data, even though, in principle, this is ideally an excellent and attractive index of effectiveness. Various other factors, not under the control of the facilitator, such as the school and home environment, can and do intervene powerfully, resulting in the facilitator being placed often in a position where, regardless of training, or particular competencies or undertaking particular tasks, the facilitator cannot succeed or cannot fail.

Further, the extent of sophistication and the depth of investigation can well determine the nature of the data available and thereby the corresponding signals for facilitator training. For example, in a significant and

well-known investigation,1/ it was found that less effective teachers usually spent more time working with disadvantaged learners in small groups, and less time working with the entire class. However, a further detailed investigation indicated that the quality of contact time was what mattered. Effective teachers tended to spend much more time in one-to-one, rather than group encounters, with their learners, than less effective teachers.

Considering the relatively primitive state of the availability of data from both these sources, a pragmatic empirical approach, for the time being, may well be to amalgamate both these profiles into a tentative list of tasks expected to be undertaken by the pre-school facilitator and of the competencies required of the facilitator to be able to perform the tasks adequately and enhance learning by children, checked against currently confirmed theoretical bases regarding the manner in which young children learn.

SELECTED LISTS OF TASKS AND COMPETENCIES

Using such a pragmatic approach, the following kinds of profiles may be established.2/

Profile of Selected Tasks

- Understand and accept the learners and their families; understand life styles, way of thinking, feelings, strengths and weaknesses.

1/ McDonald, F.J., and Elias, P., The effects of teaching performance upon pupil learning. Beginning Teacher Evaluation Study: Phase II, Final Report. 1976, Vol. 1, Princeton, N.J., Education Testing Service.

2/ Developed from Kendall, M.E., Mallet, M., Sherwood, F., Zapisocky, M., and Nanji, M., Summary of early childhood services taskforce report on teacher competence, 1976, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada: Alberta Department of Education.

- Understand the pedagogical frameworks regarding the manner of learning by young learners.

- Establish, through positive interaction with the learners, and their families, a warm, enthusiastic and trustful climate.

- Establish convenient, safe, responsive, comfortable and attractive learning spaces for the learners, in and outside the classroom; establish large and small, open and private learning spaces for appropriate activities.

- Organize materials in the learning space to permit easy access and encouragement of use, and convenient storage.

- Provide a physical and interpersonal environment that is ordered but flexible, in which experimentation, exploration and communication are encouraged without undue social and psychological risk; provide an environment that is carefully organized to permit the learners' expectations of objects and events to be confirmed or revised; provide an environment with a minimum of social restrictions on exploratory and motor activity; create an atmosphere that does not rely on a "right or wrong" paradigm in the exploratory activities.

- Provide for rapport among the learners themselves, with each other, and with adults.

- Provide for physical, verbal and emotional responses, with the responses directed more to individual learners rather than to a group of learners, or the whole class; provide for sufficient consistency and clarity in the responses to ensure cues as to appropriate, valued behaviours, and to reinforce such behaviours.

- Provide for a wide range of direct, rather than vicarious, sequenced experiences for psychomotor, affective and cognitive growth, intergrated whenever possible, with those that are

compatible with the experiences of the learner in the home learning environment; provide for activities that are developmentally appropriate, and sequenced, in a meaningful and motivating manner.

- Provide for the learner's mastery and satisfaction, as opposed to frustration and defeat, in interactions with the physical environment, with peers, and with adults.

- Provide for language development, speaking, listening and expressive competencies, which would enable the learner to organize, reorganize, deepen and enrich, the acquired factual and conceptual knowledge, and communicate to peers and adults.

- Provide for handicapped learners with concern for their growth, rather than for merely compensating for deficiencies.

- Provide for the learner to receive factual and specific feedback as information rather than as praise or criticism.

- Provide for the learner to value achievement and recognize the accomplishment of individual and group efforts.

- Provide for the observation and recording of the learner's behaviour as a basis for programme planning, so that the learner's interests and capabilities are challenged but not overloaded.

- Provide for liaison between the pre-school programme and the learner's home and community; provide for co-operative relationships with parents and others; provide for the utilization of resources in the community to ensure the total development of the child, including health and nutritional services.

- Provide service as a member of a network of educational and social services for young learners, in association with such delivery systems as creches, guidance centres, health centres, nutrition centres, primary schools.

These tasks would call for a vast array of knowledge, skills and attitudes on the part of the teachers. Among such competencies may be included the following.1/

(A) COMPETENCIES FOR THE DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PRE-SCHOOL PROGRAMME

The competencies required relate to the use of material, financial, time and spaces resources and learning/teaching activities in consonance with the learners' development levels, learning abilities and other individual characteristics.

These competencies include :

- *the ability to involve parents, community members, professionals and others in the planning and implementation of the pre-school programmes;*
- *the ability to facilitate language development in individual learners;*
- *the ability to facilitate other aspects of cognitive development in individual learners;*
- *the ability to facilitate psychomotor development in individual learners;*
- *the ability to facilitate affective and social development in individual learners;*
- *the ability to increase the learner's self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence;*

1/ Derived from McDonald, F.J. et al Op. Cit.

- *the ability to observe individual behaviour, record and plan making use of such data;*
- *the ability to comprehend the individual characteristics and special temporary and long-term needs of learners (including physical and emotional distress).*

(B) PERSONAL COMPETENCIES

The competencies required, relate to serving as an effective model of behaviour for learners and others in the pre-school programme.

These personal competencies include :

- *the ability to be aware of and analyse one's own values and prejudices, accept people without prejudice, and establish a realistic view of one's own needs and abilities;*
- *the ability to express to learners, curiosity and exploratory behaviour;*
- *the ability to manifest a sense of humour, balance and perspective and a sense of delight in the company of learners;*
- *the ability to be sensitive to the individual needs and concerns of the learners and others working in, or associated with, the pre-school programme;*
- *the ability to be emotionally responsive and flexible in approach.*

(C) INTERPERSONAL COMPETENCIES

The competencies required, relate :

i. to facilitating the learner's mastery and satisfaction in interactions with the physical environment, peers, adults;

ii. to stimulating the learner's exploration of reality rather than imposing views which may have no meaning for the learner; and

iii. to viewing success and failure as information rather than as reward or punishment.

Among them are :

- *the ability to support a learner's goal in a particular activity, rather than only curricular or teacher standards;*
- *the ability to recognize achievement in terms of individual progress, rather than in terms of conventional normative standards of the group;*
- *the ability to recognize and use the individual characteristics of the learner for development;*
- *the ability to provide the learner with a socially and psychologically safe environment;*
- *the ability to foster a supportive environment in the personal interaction between the teacher and the learners, in individual, and in group settings;*
- *the ability to provide the structure and encouragement necessary for the learners to explore, learn about, and master the environment;*
- *the ability to respond to content, motivation, and significance of behaviour of learners;*

- *the ability to communicate effectively with learners, colleagues, parents and community members.*

When specific learning objectives are available to a facilitator training programme, a number of the above competencies, such as in the knowledge area, become more specifically identified, making the training task easier to this extent, noting of course that the methodologies of openness, active learning by children, responsiveness, are still pervasively important. If recommended activities to support the self-achievement of these objectives are indicated, further assistance is available to the training design.

A sample[1/] of such a specification of objectives and activities is indicated on pages 29 to 36.

1/ Some Suggested Objectives of Pre-School Education for Malaysia, Curriculum Development Centre, Ministry of Education, Malaysia (1980).

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A SAMPLE OF
SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES	ACTIVITIES ASSOCIATED WITH OBJECTIVES
1.0 GROSS-MOTOR CO-ORDINATION: The child should be able to make these bodily movements: 1.1 To walk on a balance board (planks, bricks; refer to 'A Guide Book for Kindergarten in Malaysia CDC' p. 135-138). 1.2 To jump and land on both feet/one foot. 1.3 To climb on the ladder to the slide. 1.4 To slide down. 1.5 To hop with both feet/either foot.	Note: Activities as listed here are not associated with individual objectives but with all the objectives as a whole. a) Run/sway/walk according to music and freeze when the music stops. b) Games involving throwing and catching e.g. throwing and catching bean bags, bells, hoops. c) Dribbling balls in between skittles, bars and legs. d) Activities involving hoops:- Rolling the hoops, hopping from one hoop to another, spinning the hoop around the body.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES	ACTIVITIES ASSOCIATED WITH OBJECTIVES
1.6 To run. 1.7 To skip. 1.8 To stretch and bend. 1.9 To swing. 1.10 To throw and catch. 1.11 To have free movements of all parts of the body. 1.12 To roll	e) Balancing games:- i. Walking on the balance board (plank, bricks). ii. Balancing bean bags on the head, foot and other parts of the body. iii. Balancing games using ropes. f) Climbing games:- Climbing up and down the climbing frame and ladder. g) Outdoor excursions:- Nature walk, mini cross-country obstacle games. h) Move like animals/objects:- Leap like a frog; gallop like a horse; hop like a rabbit; spin like a top; swim like a fish; fly like an aeroplane; glide like a snake; roll like a ball, log.

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SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES	ACTIVITIES ASSOCIATED WITH OBJECTIVES
2.0 FINE MOTOR CO-ORDINATION 2.1 To be able to crush paper; to manipulate clay dough, plasticine by squeezing, pinching, poking, coil-making to create familiar forms of objects e.g. human or animal figures, cakes, etc. 2.2 To be able to tear paper. 2.2.1 Tearing creatively 2.2.2 Tearing as instructed. 2.3 To be able to paste paper by using gum and pieces of paper (Refer to Art and Craft 3.0) 2.4 To be able to hold and manipulate art materials and instruments (scissors, crayons, chalk, pencils, paintbrushes). 2.5 To be able to fold paper freely. 2.5.1 Folding creatively 2.5.2 Folding as instructed.	Activities as listed below are not associated with individual objectives but with the different objectives as a whole in this section. a) Finger play and action, e.g. Where is Thumbkin?; Twinkle, twinkle little star; Mana Ibu; Satu Jari; Pok Amai-Amai; Chekor Gemang Gamit. b) Movement involving fingers e.g. pretending to play the piano; pretending to type a letter; pretending to cut vegetables; pretending to cut a piece of paper. c) Music and movement involving toes, fingers e.g. move the fingers and toes according to the rhythm of music. d) Activities involving cutting and pasting e.g. cut and paste picture as in collage work. e) Activities involving manipulative play e.g. manipulating clay as in clay modelling.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES	ACTIVITIES ASSOCIATED WITH OBJECTIVES
2.6 To be able to cut paper with scissors. 2.6.1 Free cutting 2.6.2 Cutting along a line 2.6.3 Cutting between two lines 2.6.4 Cutting along curved lines.	f) Activities involving puppetry (Refer to pp 44-47 of 'A Guide Book for Kindergartens in Malaysia, CDC)'.
2.7 To be able to thread beads, flowers, straw and other objects with holes using wire, string, raffia and other materials.	g) Drawing and pattern-making activities e.g. finger drawing using colours, starch, etc. (for more details refer to section on Art and Craft activities).
2.8 To be able to trace lines and simple pre-writing patterns.	h) Pre-writing activities e.g. scribbling or writing in the air and in the sand tray, etc.
2.9 To be able to copy lines and simple pre-writing patterns.	i) Manipulative activities involving eye-hand co-ordination e.g. threading beads; threading a needle; locking and unlocking a lock; pulling up and down a zip; buttoning and unbuttoning; hook and line game (fishing game).
2.10 To be able to create patterns or symbolic figures with parts of his body, e.g. finger painting and printing.	

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SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES		ACTIVITIES ASSOCIATED WITH OBJECTIVES
2.11	To be able to trace the letters of the alphabet and numbers using his fingers and pencils. (Cautionary note: The child should be tracing and copying the letters of the alphabet and numbers under the close supervision of the teacher).	j) Skittle game e.g. ring the skittles with a hoop; knock the skittles down with a ball.
2.12	To be able to write the letters 'i', 't', and 'v' involving vertical/horizontal/diagonal strokes proceeding to circles and partial circles. Note: The child should progressively be writing an increasing number of letters of the alphabet and numbers.	

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES	ACTIVITIES ASSOCIATED WITH OBJECTIVES
3.0 LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT	
3.1 To understand and produce simple and acceptable language forms.	3.1 Story telling. Story reading. Answering questions about the important things in a story. Telling news. Discussing with the teacher. Singing action songs. Finger plays. Talking about any activity in which he is engaged. Listening to instructions and carrying them out. Class and group discussion. Impromptu drama. Talking about sand play and water play, especially where cause and effect are shown. Children should be encouraged to use connective words in sentences, e.g. but, because, when, so, if. Gardening and pets provide sources of discussion. Retelling a story in logical sequence. Reporting experiences. Describing objects, especially their sensory qualities (art, handwork, and music). Expressing feelings in words.
3.2 To use language effectively for a specific purpose.	
3.2.1 Communication with self.	3.2.1 Any activity which causes the child to talk to himself as he plays with constructional toys, water and sand, wooden blocks.

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SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES	ACTIVITIES ASSOCIATED WITH OBJECTIVES
3.2.2 Communication with others. a) To drop childish expressions. b) To use language as a tool for classification, e.g. know names of colours and shapes. c) To use language socially. d) To gain information. e) To contribute in a discussion.	3.2.2 The teacher will use more precise expressions in replying when the child employs childish expressions. Constructional toys, building blocks are used in making collage and other Art and Handwork activities to emphasize efficient communication. Dramatic play. Taking turns. Sharing apparatus. Being concerned with the welfare of other children and reporting their difficulties to the teacher. The curious child asks questions, especially how and why questions. Project work is important. Talking about pictures, planning activities and talking about stories.
3.3 To use language appropriate to the physical and social situation.	3.3 This is usually done spontaneously by the child as far as the social aspect is concerned, otherwise the teacher will stimulate, direct and correct. Using the correct word or expression depends on sub-skill (b) below (i.e. to have a rich vocabulary).

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES	ACTIVITIES ASSOCIATED WITH OBJECTIVES
NOTE: The cognitive sub-skills of the above are:- a) To articulate clearly. b) To have a rich vocabulary.	The teacher takes every opportunity available to further enrich the child's vocabulary.
3.4 To use language freely.	3.4 Dramatic Play. Talking about one's own painting and free modelling. Children slow to use language freely, can be encouraged through news, stories with repetition rhymes, songs, mime and puppets.
3.5 To use language to attain specific goals.	3.5 Group activities involving any form or problem solving will encourage children to express points of views. Even a jigsaw puzzle being worked on by two children can stimulate this kind of discussion.

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CHAPTER III

TRAINING MODES

GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS

Using one or more the the approaches discussed in Chapter II, separately or in amalgamation, it is, in principle, possible to identify the tasks that pre-school facilitators have to perform. From such a task analysis, the required competencies may be derived.

However, even if such derivations are done meticulously, the vast array of ambiguities indicated above, will always detract from the accuracy needed for the development of specific and practical guidelines for the many aspects of facilitator training.

Many tertiary level pre-school training programmes in the Asia and Pacific Region have, for example, suffered criticisms from the angle that they do not equip the trainees to meet the realities of field pre-school situations.

The "trainers" themselves often lack field experience and are unable to provide the necessary "reality balance" in their formalized courses.

Large quantities of theory are provided, and it is left to the inexperienced trainee to select from the diffused mass, those

elements that may apply to particular situations in the every day functioning of the pre-schools.

In this context, the fact that some of the most effective pre-school education programmes are those that have come from training programmes that are securely FIELD-BASED, participatory and in the form of SUPERVISED INTERNSHIP AT ACTUAL PRE-SCHOOLS, is worthy of consideration.

In this training mode, the complexity of the real life situations, which is the scenario the trainees have to face after the training, itself becomes the training vehicle. The absence of formal systematic analyses of tasks and competencies becomes of secondary importance when the training involves grappling with real life situations under the guidance of selected, experienced, skilled pre-school practitioners, whose theoretical base is firmly rooted in, and modulated by, the realities of the field situation. Analysed modelling of experienced practitioners becomes a major vehicle of training. This kind of training is especially important for pre-school facilitators who intend to serve disadvantaged learners in poverty environments.

Each field internship training episode may be interspersed with brief "theoretical" sessions, which essentially involve the "extraction" of theory from the collective empirical experiences trainees have had in the field, elaborations of the theory against further empirical observations and assignments, derived from theory for more directed empirical observations in the field. Through this process, both the strength and the weakness and ambiguities of the theory are visible in realistic terms. Such brief interspersions are built into the training, coupled with

PRACTICAL TRAINING-CUM-PRODUCTION SESSIONS to enhance methodological and technique competencies, over successive training sessions, thus contributing to long-term continuity of training.

This does not imply that academic-based institutional training is without use. Rather, it emphasizes the need for the essential component of real life interaction with the realities of pre-school education, under direct and intensive guidance of a skilled practitioner, to be included in these training programmes as well. The superior facilities at academic institutions may also permit direct involvement processes, in addition to internship. For example, such institutions may incorporate clinical experiences, sensitivity training, classroom simulations, together with supervised internship. Some combinations of training modes are more likely to produce the desired facilitator behaviours, than only relatively remote or abstract experiences such as from lectures on instructional strategies and methodologies, or from ritualistic "practice teaching" in "superior" pre-schools.

In all these modes, it is essential that the trainers serve as role models for the pre-school trainee facilitators in the contexts in which these trainees are expected to practice their profession (and not in the context of some idealized setting which cannot be replicated in field situations).

When pre-school trainee facilitators are treated in the same methodological patterns and in the same circumstances they are supposed to treat their learners, they are more likely to adopt desired attributes of facilitator behaviour.

The successful training programmes for pre-school facilitators in countries in the Asia and Pacific Region, which have a heavy field experience emphasis, though incorporating sometimes different models and emphases, have the following common characteristics:

- intensive and extensive field experience and substantial amounts of practical activity are integral components of the training;

- the training reflects (i) conscious adaptation to specific local needs and cultural milieu, (ii) flexibility and variation in response to local situations; and it is largely conducted at decentralized field levels, often at field pre-school centres themselves;

- the trainers are skilled practitioners and not mere book-experts. Some of them in the training team are experienced field workers or are themselves pre-school facilitators of high calibre;

- the methodology has a pronounced weightage given to (i) analysis of field experience with, and observation of, children as a basis for deriving theoretical concepts and structures, (ii) a variety of modes of training, including demonstration, simulation, discussion, self-learning from resource materials, practical exercises, individually and in groups;

- the trainee/trainer ratio is usually kept small for any given training session, to provide for a higher order of person-to-person interaction. Even if the trainee group is large, the low ratio is obtained by providing for a great deal of group and individual work;

- the training is maintained in a cyclic sequence interspersed with performance at pre-schools. Some components of the training are on-the-job, under the guidance of experienced facilitators at the pre-school centre and/or supervisors who are themselves skilled practioners of pre-school education.

An example 1/ of a design for decentralized experience-based training is the one recently recommended for the para-professional facilitators in the nation-wide integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS), India. The design is in these phases :

Phase I : Orientation of the facilitators at the project implementation level itself for a period of three weeks. During the first week the facilitators are provided with a collective practical orientation about the various aspects of the Scheme and then placed individually in field centres for one week. During the third week they are gathered together for a further collective briefing by various personnel in the Scheme, including content specialists in pre-school education, health, nutrition, sanitation.

Phase II : After the first phase, the facilitator spends 3-6 months at a field pre-school centre and then is brought to a training centre for a second phase of collective training for 3 months. During the field placement, experienced facilitators at the pre-school centre provide guidance to the new recruit.

Phase III : After the Phase II training, the new recruit facilitator works at a field pre-school centre for a minimum of one year and then undergoes Phase III training, imparted at the field level by professionally-trained personnel with wide field experience or by a mobile team of such personnel. The duration may be up to two weeks, depending upon local specific requirements. The training team is briefed

1/ Report of the NCERT/Unesco Sponsored National Workshop in Early Childhood Education (Teacher Education), Child Study Unit, National Council of Educational Research and Training, New Delhi, India (1983) (p. 20, 21).

about local specific shortfalls prior to the training, so that the training becomes highly specific and focused upon identified elements for quality improvement.

(Continuing refresher courses would follow Phase III at periodic intervals in support of continuing training of the facilitator).

SHORT COURSE DESIGN

The countries that have committed themselves to a massive expansion of pre-school education over the next few years, have recognized that the number of facilitators produced in the one/two year courses were insufficient to meet the enormous and urgent demands that arise out of these massive programmes. These countries have opted for a variety of short condensed courses, which are strongly EXPERIENCE-BASED, and which are capable of being conducted at decentralized levels, including at remote pre-schools themselves.

Since recruitments to the new pre-school facilitator cadre will come mainly from local rural and other disadvantaged areas where decentralized training is to be done, it is likely that the entry academic qualifications of the new trainee facilitator will be at best around Grade VIII of secondary education, and many may well be primary school graduates.

Both for the reasons of short-term initial training, and of the entry qualifications of the new cadre of pre-school facilitators, a reduction of the curricula now being used at tertiary level and other institutions conducting long-term courses, becomes inevitable.

The short course needs to provide for BASIC OR ESSENTIAL MINIMUM CORE COMPETENCIES that will make it

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possible for the newly trained to undertake the most significant tasks adequately at a pre-school, immediately after training. In terms of the philosophies of learning to be adopted in the pre-schools, these most significant tasks have to be derived from the most significant *learning situations* for children of pre-school age. There are, of course, many ways in which to derive the most significant learning situations. Two countries in the Asia and Pacific Region, committed to massive expansion, have both chosen to derive these learning situations from the most significant learning characteristics of children of pre-school age.

The selected priority characteristics (and there could be others), are the following :

- *learning is through activity, preferably in association with gross motor activity;*
- *learning takes place in a holistic manner whatever the learning situation may be. All domains of learning are simultaneously involved and much of the learning is incidental;*
- *learning takes place in a highly individualized manner. Thus learning on a child-by-child basis has to be the focus.*

If such a set is chosen, then facilitator competencies to mobilize and support such characteristics have to be generated by the facilitator training curricula. For example, the facilitator has to have a repertoire of attractive, joyful, play and exploratory activities for children to perform in support of learning, incorporating the above characteristics.1/ The facilitator has to have competencies to ensure that these activities may be implemented in support of learning, through open systems that provide for exploration, discovery and creativity. Some of these activities

1/ Many reference sources for such activities are available, in the Region and outside, such as Swaminathan, Mina, Play Activities for Young Children, UNICEF, New Delhi, 1983.

would be such as to provide initiatory learning in children, and others to reinforce and apply learning.:

For example :

- discriminating sounds made by "sound tins" containing seeds or nails or stones or sand, at the initiatory level, and trying to match to another tin which sounds like the one which holds seeds, for reinforcement and application;
- enumeration of items and events in a real life village scene viewed by the child, at the initiation stage, and "where else" the baskets in the scene are seen and used in every day life.

So the activities support an establishment of a knowledge bank and also support the competencies of selective retrieval and transfer of knowledge. Since classroom space, outdoor space, home and community space are all considered potential learning spaces, the activities for a given learning domain would have optimum access to all these spaces.

In general the design structure for these activities would be as follows :

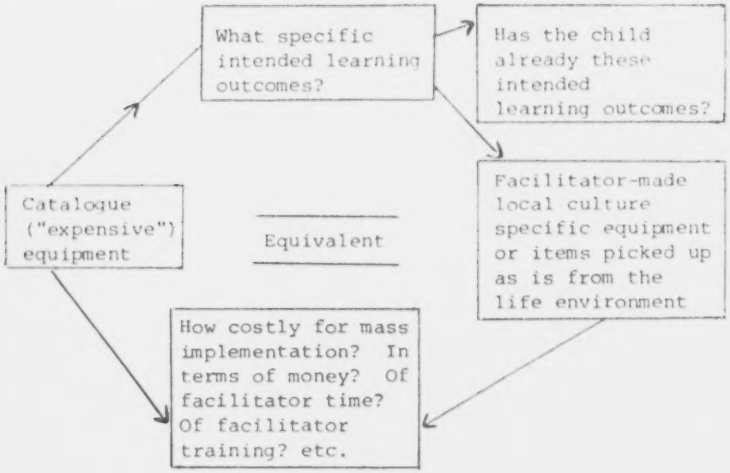
Reinforcement Application	H				
	O				
	C				
Initiatory	H				
	O				
	C				
		Mental	Physical	Social	Emotional Aesthetic

H = Home and community learning space.
O = Out-door learning space at pre-school
C = Classroom learning space at pre-school.

Aspects such as joy, exploration and creativity are to be present pervasively in these activities.

Activities frequently involve equipment and materials. Since the facilitators would most likely be serving in rural and other disadvantaged areas, the facilitators would need to have competencies to construct such equipment and materials using locally available resources and/or see in existing items, utensils, implements in the environment, the potentialities for these to be used as learning equipment and materials in the pre-school education of the child.

The first step in the production of the learning equipment and materials is to evolve the design from a consideration of intended learning outcomes, which would indicate alternative equipment and materials for the same intended learning outcome. "Low or no cost" would now be used as the criterion for selecting the equipment and material design to be produced during the training.


What specific intended learning outcomes?
Has the child already these intended learning outcomes?
Facilitator-made local culture specific equipment or items picked up as is from the life environment
Equivalent
Cataloque ("expensive") equipment
How costly for mass implementation? In terms of money? Of facilitator time? Of facilitator training? etc.

Even if (costly) catalogue equipment is available, for its optimum use, an analysis has to be made of the intended learning outcomes that the piece of equipment is supposed to produce in the child. The identification of the intended learning outcomes makes it possible to look for alternative designs to reach the same intended learning outcomes. (Such an exercise introduced into facilitator training provides effective opportunities to enhance internalisation of the implications of the intended learning outcomes, and to enhance creativity of the facilitators.) The essential design issue is not that a cheap piece of equipment substitutes for an expensive one, but that in terms of intended learning outcomes, the two are equivalent.

It could also be that the intended learning outcomes have already been achieved by the child. For example, the gross motor movement activities recommended for affluent pre-schools are not needed for poor farm-raised rural children.

Once the trainees have had practice in this kind of analysis and creative design, the trainers may assign exercises such as the following :

- *Children like to jump, push, pull, etc. How could these enjoyable activities be used to self-achieve given intended learning outcomes in the psychomotor domain; in all the other domains?*
- *There are many readily available objects and materials in the child's environment like stones, trees, buckets, mud, etc. How may these be*

used to enhance psychomotor development? Development in all the other domains?

- *There are many events and actions in the home that the child is involved in or observes. How may these be used to enhance psychomotor development? Development in all the other domains?*

Such exercises would be integral to the training programmes for the facilitators.

A shortened course would not be able to provide a vast bulk of THEORETICAL KNOWLEDGE, as is commonly practised in long facilitator training courses (validly or not). It is also likely that the academically unqualified trainee will not be able to absorb large doses of theory. For the highest and most rapid practical value, the theoretical component may be considered, for example, as those selected elements of theory that justify the three learning characteristics above. Therefore, a pre-selection of theory has to be made for the trainee by the professors (who know the theory best) and this selection has to be focused upon the functional use of theory in practising the selected facilitating tasks. Further, the theoretical aspects may be related to interpretations required regarding clinical observations and analyses in the home and pre-school life of the child.

Since the immature trainee has to internalise rapidly the implications of the theory, as well as the theory itself, a portion of this training in theory needs to involve direct interaction with, and investigations on, children themselves, to provide empirical bona fides for the acceptance of such theory by the trainee. Theoretical "statements" regarding "child logic", for example, which may be "illogical" in terms of "adult logic", can be accepted quickly if the trainees

have actual experience of children practising this child logic in real situations. Thus the "theory" component package would include the following components:

- *Justification on theoretical grounds, of the significant learning characteristics of the child, and explanations of empirical observations such as of classroom and home life of the child.*
- *Interactions and investigations with children on selected critical theoretical aspects related to the learning characteristics.*

(Options for providing "theory" are discussed in further detail later).

CLASSROOM AND LEARNING SPACE DESIGN AND MANAGEMENT PRACTICES, have also to be reconsidered and the necessary competencies acquired by the trainee facilitators, to facilitate open learning.1/

EVALUATION OF LEARNERS has also to be considered in terms of the above characteristics and the open learning system implied.

Hands-on experience in regard to the above is required which may be provided by practice in the pre-school, under the supervision of experienced and competent pre-school facilitators, enriched with clinical analysis of the practice.

The above implies a "practice package" in the short training programme which would include the following components:

- *Repertoire of learning activities and production of relevant learning equipment and materials.*

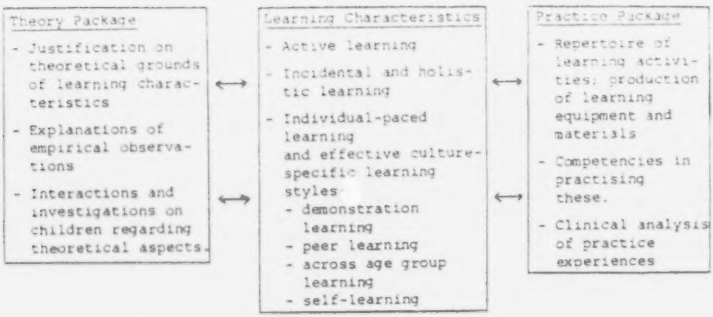
1/ Vide resources such as Education Building Digest, Design Ideas for Pre-School Centres, Unesco, Bangkok (1984).

- *Competencies in practising these activities in the classroom and using the learning equipment and materials for facilitating learning in the open system.*
- *Clinical analysis of this "practising" experience.*

Special attention may be paid to mobilizing culture-specific home learning styles in the pre-school learning environment. Such aspects as *demonstration learning; peer learning; learning across age groups; self-learning,* have significant contributions to make in the open learning system.

The following summarizes the curriculum framework:

Curriculum Framework
for
A Training Model for Rapid Mass Training of Pre-School Facilitators


Theory Package
- Justification on theoretical grounds of learning characteristics
- Explanations of empirical observations
- Interactions and investigations on children regarding theoretical aspects.
Learning Characteristics
- Active learning
- Incidental and holistic learning
- Individual-paced learning and effective culture-specific learning styles
- demonstration learning
- peer learning
- across age group learning
- self-learning
Practice Package
- Repertoire of learning activities; production of learning equipment and materials
- Competencies in practising these.
- Clinical analysis of practice experiences

A COMPREHENSIVE TRAINING SYSTEM

While recognizing the urgent need for systematically-designed, practical, experience-based short courses of training for pre-school facilitators to meet the immediate demand, many countries also envisage a comprehensive system of training which integrately involves continuing education of those trained in short courses, and which has a place for (improved) long-term formal training as well.

A total training system is envisaged, with the three, six and nine month courses, as well as the twelve and twenty-four month courses, all being coherent sub-systems in the training system, and available as options according to the different situational requirements, but capable of rational articulation from the lowest time course to the highest.

For example, the total facilitator training system in one country, may be considered as consisting of several articulated levels:

Level I : three-month course

Level II : six-month course (3 + 3 months)

Level III : nine-month course (6 + 3 months or 9 months)

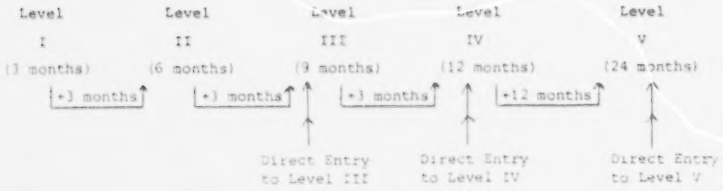
Level IV : twelve-month course (9 + 3 months or 12 months)

Level V : twenty-four-month course (12 + 12 months or 24 months).

The six-month course would take in only those who had already completed the three-month course and had field experience of at least one year. The nine-month course may take in those who have covered the six-month course or who have direct entry into the nine-month course. Preference will be given to those with field experience. Direct entry trainees would have a training course different to those with field experience.

Similarly, the twelve-month course may have those who have covered the nine-month course or direct entry trainees who cover the twelve months,

and the twenty-four-month course may have those who have covered the twelve-month course or direct entry trainees who cover the twenty-four months, the separate courses being specifically designed to take into account the particular characteristics of the population.



Those proceeding from level to level may be required to acquire a minimum number of years teaching service in pre-schools (say one to three years), and their additive courses may be conducted as full-time or part-time, as situations demand, conducted most often at decentralized locations.

Such an articulation in facilitator training, requires a detailed consideration of, and reforms in, the current in-and pre-service programmes as well.

The decentralized nature of a great portion of the total training system requires new infrastructures such as decentralized resource centres and mobile training teams.

Special Design Considerations

There are several practical aspects that have been found worthy of special consideration. These include:

- modes for the presentation of theory during training;
- field assignments to be provided to the trainees facilitator as components of training.

There are also certain other particularly important aspects of pre-school education that have been found to require special attention in facilitator training programmes. These stem from unique attributes of the child population and its circumstances.

The following are examples of some of these aspects stated in general terms:

- *the encouragement of free play and the individual interests of the learners while preventing play and unstructured activities from degenerating into fortuitous learning experiences;*
- *the recognition of the extent to which the individual learner learns, taking into consideration that learning takes place at all times, and not at pre-set times, and that learning takes place in all spaces, and not only in a given space;*
- *the establishment of developmental bridges between the home learning environment and the pre-school learning environment;*
- *the establishment of holistic approaches and strategies which take into account the total development of the learner;*
- *assistance in the remarkable transformation of the learner from "self-centred" behaviour to "others-centred" behaviour;*
- *the enhancement of the self-respect and self-confidence of the young learners so as to develop capacities for self-learning and self-reward;*
- *the importance of eliminating the effects of long-term poverty especially in the affective domain, for children from disadvantaged areas.*

Selected aspects of these special design issues are considered in further detail in the following section.

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CHAPTER IV

SPECIAL DESIGN ISSUES

ALTERNATIVE MODES FOR USING THEORY IN TRAINING

In most countries the common mode of "giving" theory in education psychology, child development, pedagogy, etc., to trainees and other personnel, is the provision, "in the cold", of an extensive range of theoretical concepts and schemes, often structured in terms of one or more discipline hierarchies in the traditional subject matter areas. The trainee is expected to select one or more portions of this mass for practical use.

In shortened courses (3, 6 and 9 month cycles), there would not be enough time to provide such masses of theory. Further, since the courses have to be such as to equip the trainees in practical competencies, what theory is provided, must be in such a form as to be able to be utilized quickly for functional use in the pre-school classes. The low academic standards of trainees in these short courses would also demand this.

Hence the development of alternative modes for presenting theory to the trainees, becomes an important design action, which requires a great deal of homework before the new training programmes may be implemented.

Indicated below are three alternative modes (among several possibilities) which have found success in shortened courses, for providing trainees with a theory base with quick practical use in view. Judicious combinations of these alternatives are likely to give better results than any one alone, done in an exclusive manner.

i. Use of theory *to explain and justify selected learning and other developmental characteristics of pre-school children:* Thereby pre-selection of the theory has to be undertaken, and that which is selected has to have direct focus on the practical implications of the child characteristics, for designing learning sequences for pre-school children, and for the design of corresponding learning equipment and materials. (This has been referred to earlier).

ii. Use of theory *in support of clinical analysis of learning situations in the real life of pre-school:* Justification, explanation and interpretation become major purposes of the theory. Pre-selection is again automatically required. The clinical analysis of learning situations, especially in regard to the behaviour of children in these situations, requires justification, explanation and interpretation in terms of theory. Such an exercise provides the trainee with a coherent body of theory for practical use, and also surfaces the strengths, weaknesses and ambiguities of the theoretical frameworks, in terms of empirical evidence from the day-to-day functioning of the pre-school, including relationships to learning situations, equipment and materials.

iii. Use of theory *in discussions on, and critical reviews of, commonly held opinions, design principles, rules of thumb, etc.* related to the design and implementation of pre-school education for support of or for questioning these statements.

Option (ii.) above, which interacts with the real life situations of the pre-schools, though ideally the most thorough for obtaining or testing theory, is difficult to use too frequently in practice, due to cost, management and time constraints. Also, instant, on the spot, reactions to field evidence are called for from the theoreticians, leaving them little or no time for preparation. This would demand high level expertise in content and field experience from the theoreticians.

The third alternative has been found to possess great flexibility of use in pre- and in-service training of facilitators (and in the enhancement of the competencies of curriculum developers as well). It may be executed in a varied set of discussion sessions at convenient times in the training, thus reducing cost, management and time problems. Further, the statements embodying the opinions, principles, etc., can be prepared ahead by the theoreticians. Thereby the trainers as well as the trainees can come prepared for the discussions on the relevant theory that needs to be considered.

Statements embodying the views or design principles or rules of thumb, may form the take-off point for discussing their validity, and the relevant theory may be focused, either to support or to deny, the validity of the statements.

The statements may become the basis of entry-behaviour tests for new trainees, especially in regard to the nature and extent of opinions held by the new entrants, from which the necessary intervention activities during the training may be designed. The statements could also become the basis of formative and summative evaluation during and after the training, and by this process, provide pre- and post-evidence of learning gains, if these statements are used in the entry tests too.

The statements, after verification for validity, could become models for the development of other such statements, especially of design principles. A collection of such statements of design principles could form a summary aide memoire for the trainees at the end of a course.

The following are examples of types of such statements,[1/] which in themselves may or may not be valid in terms of theoretical or empirical grounds:

- A pre-school child who tries should be rewarded, whether or not her performance was correct or acceptable.
- A pre-school facilitator should not talk much in class.
- Pre-school children should not be rushed. Work with them should be conducted at a leisurely pace.
- Successful learning depends upon small class sizes and the maintaining of a low child-adult ratio.
- Holistic approaches are wasteful for children from disadvantaged environments. They amount to giving a smattering of learning in many areas, and no depth in the very areas where the child has significant deficits.

A great deal of flexibility is available in presentation formats for such statements. For example, design principles may be presented for discussion directly as statements of rules, such as the following. (Some statements included are valid and others are not, in terms of theoretical and empirical grounds.)

- While pre-school children can learn a great deal from play, a pre-school education programme should not be based upon the play motive.
- The child is the only active person in the learning process.

1/ Statements derived from (and added to) Miller, L.B.; Dyer, J.L.; Four Pre-School Programmes: Their Dimensions and Effects, Society for Research in Child Development, Monograph 40, No.5-6. (Vide pp 143-147, Appendix B, Forms for Model Programme Verification).

- Language as a vehicle to learning should be minimized with pre-school children.

- A heavy emphasis on colouring pictures already drawn for the child can dampen a child's creativity.

They may also be presented in the format of facilitator behaviour, such as in the following, again including valid and invalid statements:

- Pre-school facilitators should set realistic and clearly specified goals which the child can reach in a relatively short period of time.

- The principle task of the pre-school facilitator is to prepare the child to enter primary school.

- During the time a facilitator is presenting a lesson, pre-school children should not be allowed to interrupt or to relate personal experiences, otherwise they will learn bad habits of indiscipline.

- A facilitator who tries to meet all the needs of a pre-school child is sure to extend herself beyond the range of her competencies.

- A pre-school facilitator should expect children to work hard and be smart.

It is often useful to mix into the list of such statements, ones that in principle or apparently contradict each other, such as the following. The degree of contradiction can be varied too:

- A pre-school facilitator should not have fixed ideas about what pre-school children should learn.

vs

- Dealing with abstractions through language is an essential experience for the disadvantaged child.

or

- The pre-school facilitator should provide the child with a clear and realistic definition of success and failure.

or

- A pre-school facilitator should expect her pupils to do things that will make her proud of them.

It is also useful to mix in statements of general principles with statements dealing with specific elements, and, again, the statements may be valid or invalid, or may support or contradict each other, such as the following:

- Reward is usually more effective than punishment, particularly when dealing with learning new responses.

and

- Isolation as a form of punishment should not be used with a withdrawn or shy child.

or

- Young children learn at all times and in all places. So holistic learning is the best strategy to use with young children.

and

- For pre-school purposes, we could treat cultural deprivation as virtually synonymous with language deprivation and emphasize language above all else in the pre-school.

or

- A great deal of unstructured incidental learning is a characteristic of a good pre-school programme.

and

- In language or mathematics or physical education, every task a pre-school child learns, consists of certain defined steps which must be mastered in a certain order.

or

- A well-rounded programme of pre-school education is incompatible with the goal of remedial education at a faster than normal pace, for disadvantaged children.

and

- When we teach a specific learning area (such as paper dyeing), we should also bring in other learning areas (such as symmetry, from mathematics).

When such statements are collected, they generally fall into several categories, such as general design principles, specific design principles, facilitator behaviours, or they may be classified into important aspects of the learning environment. In the presentation of the statements, especially for summative evaluation or opinion survey purposes, it is frequently useful to mix the categories so that skills of appropriate and purposeful retrieval from the background theory and empirical experience of the trainee may be sharpened. However, if it is required to present a narrower range of theory, these practical areas may be taken separately. Such a strategy has proved to be effective during the initial components of the training.

The following is an example of a set of a somewhat complex mix of statements. The statements below cover several theory and practice areas; they may be valid or not valid; the statements may have words which can be interpreted in different ways and these interpretations may even contradict each other; a statement as a whole may support or contradict a part or whole of another statement; and the statement may be cast in a general or specific form.

Pairs of the valid and the invalid or pairs used to highlight contradictions, may be separated across the list of statements for summative evaluation, as is done in the listing below. For formative learning, the pairs may be juxtaposed to provide greater focus to the discussions.

Mixed Listing of Statements

- Material reward should be used only initially with pre-school children, and then, gradually shifted to social approval.
- With young children, activity, especially gross physical activity, is the main basis of learning.
- The school environment for the pre-school child who is disadvantaged, should be orderly and predictable.
- In every concept, whatever the learning area, there is a series of steps which should be learned in a certain order.
- Pre-school facilitators should be cautious about encouraging strong emotional identification in the children, particularly those from disadvantaged environments.
- The enthusiasm and interest children have in a task, is more important than how well they can do it.
- If restraining and admonishing a child does not work, and the child's behaviour is destructive or dangerous, physical punishment should be used.
- In pre-school education, a quiet classroom is an ineffective classroom.
- A facilitator should never discipline a pre-school child unless she personally observes the offense.
- The only valid impulse to learning is the self-motivation of the child.
- Marginality of the parents in disadvantaged environments seeps down to their children. Through strong emotional identification and rapport between the pre-school facilitator and the disadvantaged child, a sense of self-worth may be developed which can then lead to the development of independence.
- Pre-school children learn primarily through increasing their ability to perceive.

- A facilitator should arrange the resources in the pre-school class to provide for a richness and variety of experiences embedded in an apparent "chaos", and should include a number of surprises for the child.

- A pre-school facilitator should not shame or coax a child, but should enforce rules in a matter of fact way.

- Young children learn most easily through manipulating concrete objects.

- The facilitator should guard against over-controlling and over-maniuplating young children in pre-school.

- We should try to make bridges with the home learning environment not only by using in the pre-school, familiar home equipment and materials, but also by using home life events, and the learning environment. Frequently, in demonstration learning at home, the child's active learning does not follow the order of steps taken for some home task.

- Young children's learning is highly individualized, so that pre-school learning experiences have to be designed to meet the individual learning needs and pace of children.

- With disadvantaged children, since they experience plenty of gross motor activity doing their home chores, the pre-school teacher should concentrate on cognitive tasks.

- A pre-school programme should begin on the first day in such a way as to indicate to the children and parents, the seriousness of the work in the pre-school.

Such statements, naturally, have to be selected in critical areas of functioning in the pre-school and need to incorporate hidden assumptions which have to be clarified for better understanding and transfer of theory.

In a formative situation, a set of such statements may be used as the basis for discussing theoretical issues, and

further elaboration of the theory can proceed, after the discussion of what theory says, in terms of what observational and research evidence made such theoretical consideration possible. But the theory areas become selected in terms of the selection of the statements, while statements themselves are selected in terms of their importance in practical implementation. An interesting outcome of using this modality is that, as with option (ii), shortfalls and ambiguities in the theoretical layer are visible in a very real way, which forces the trainees and the theory experts to fall back on classroom empirical evidence, once again, to finally decide on interpretation of and support or otherwise to the statements. Thus the performance of pre-school children, the final purpose of the entire programme of pre-school education, takes the centre stage throughout this portion of the training.

ASSIGNMENTS FOR THE TRAINEE FACILITATOR

The characteristic that stands out in experience-weighted training programmes, even if they are short courses, is the significantly high proportion of interaction with real life pre-school situations and with children, which is integral to the training.

To maximise benefits of this interaction, and to heighten sensitivities and competencies of such experiences, the trainee may be given specific practical assignments during the decentralized training, and/or assignments which have to be completed prior to further training while the trainee is in the field attachment phase, and which are utilized during the subsequent training for further enhancement of training competencies.

Some of these assignments may individually require relatively short time investment on the part of the trainee, such as locating a few "anti-social" children and observing a few characteristics of their behaviour; or observing how an experienced fellow pre-school facilitator deals with such "anti-social" behaviour; (or other aspects of action by the experienced and skilled fellow facilitator); or observing the nature of fantasy play and the words spoken during such play; or developing multi-sensori activities to illustrate "same" and "different", (or several other such learning activities).

Other assignments may be of longer duration, even over several months, which would require careful observation and recording, and sustained perseverance on the part of the trainee. Some examples of this kind are indicated below.

(i) Attributes of the Home Environment of the Child

A very important skill that the facilitator has to develop, is the identification of THE ENTRY CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CHILD.

This identification can be made more complete and the conditions that make for these entry behaviours more understandable, if the facilitator has had experience in observing and analysing the home environment of the child. Such an analysis can also form the basis on which bridges may be built between the pre-school and the home, especially for the continuity of the development process whether the child is in the pre-school or the home. Further, the analysis has been found to contribute substantially to identifying activities, materials, utensils, methodologies, infrastructures, familiar to the child in the home learning environment, in harmony with the child's cultural milieu, which may be utilized in the pre-school for initiation, and for reinforcement of learning.

An important understanding from such an analysis is that the child entering the pre-school is not totally devoid of competencies. The home does contain child-rearing practices which have the potential for being convergent with practices in pre-school related to development.

The trainee facilitator may be provided with an observation framework that itself may be generated out of a discussion session on home learning and child rearing, which contains elements such as the following:

- How is the child across various ages provided security, love and warmth?
- What social adjustment skills does the child learn across various ages? How are they learned?
- What home life-task skills are acquired across various ages by the child? How are they acquired?
- What forms of interactions take place among peers, siblings?
- What forms of interactions take place between the child and adults?
- What are the reactions to play of adults in the home?
- What is the nature of verbal interaction in the home?
- What social changes, as a result of "modernization", affect the child?

The results of such observations and analyses could form the basis of group discussion during training sessions, to provide for the sharpening and pooling of the results.

The product of such observations and analyses would provide an effective first-hand resource usable for the many purposes indicated above. The following is a brief example of some items of

observation and analysis produced by a group of facilitators, after they had been further processed during several training sessions:

- The very young child is generally surrounded by a pervasive scenario of security and warmth, arising out of the variety of care-givers in the extended family.

- Living intensively in the social matrix of the extended family, including siblings as well as members of the parental and grand-parental age group, contributes to the child being able to live harmoniously in a highly complex social milieu, and to the early acquisition of the ability to relate to different categories of people in approved ways (some of which may even be mutually contradictory), and acquire considerable emotional stability and strength.

- Discipline and socialization are usually by induction, and later through reference to rules, and authoritarian methods of child rearing rather than through modes of explanation or appeal to reason. These are frequently related to dogmatic religious and philosophical, as opposed to "rational" secular metaphysics, leading to obedience, but also contributing to low performance in some critical cognitive areas like problem-solving, inferential thinking and analysis based on questioning.

- Early and frequent exposure to practical life-tasks and participation in household and productive chores, leads to early competence in life tasks, acquisition of required knowledge and skills mainly by imitation learning to begin with, but later also by peer and self-learning, and high performance in motor skills of various sorts, particularly those which are supportive of survival in disadvantaged environments. Self-learning is also initiated, often in play situations.

- Increasing amounts of time in childhood is spent with peers and slightly older children who act as educative models, leading to the development of interactive, co-operative and group living skills, and learning from peers.

Self-learning becomes an important mode of learning, frequently following up on peer learning, and usually in terms of motor skills relevant to survival situations, such as bird catching, fishing, household chores. The three (imitation, peer, and self-learning) form a powerfully established and complex interacting set of learning styles in the learning rhythms of the child. They move in their weightage of their contributions to learning, according to different learning content.

- Permissiveness or "benign" neglect of the child's spontaneous play, so long as it does not interfere with adult preoccupations is common. However, in poverty conditions, the pressure of survival needs may be so strong that no time is left for constructive play. (Here there may be differences between the rural and urban and between the traditional and modern).

- Low verbal interaction, with dependence on non-verbal communication, is frequently seen. During learning by observation, imitation and practice language is used mainly in instrumental or directive modes, leading to competence in social and physical skills, and poor performance in reflective and other modes of language use.

- Lack of explicit verbalized reference to many concepts, and reasons for customs and practices, reduces the area of language use. Underlying attitudes are taken for granted, contributing to poor verbal articulation. Since societies are constantly undergoing cultural, social, economic and political transition, this itself generates many new needs peculiar to these changes. The importance of these changes is most critically felt when children have to live in the two worlds (separated by perhaps thousands of years) - one of the "traditional" home and the other of the fast changing society.

(ii) Mobilizing the Home Learning Environment for Development

Subsequent to observation and analysis of the home environment of the child and the various kinds of competencies that gradually develop and whose development may be facilitated, the trainee may undertake a second assignment of identifying activities that take place in the presence of and/or with the participation by children of pre-school age, as part of the life rhythms in the home. These activities may then be analysed in group discussion for their potential for the development of the child. Pages 68 and 69 illustrate the products of such observations and analyses.1/

Current reforms in pre-school education in many countries are making efforts towards incorporating national cultural traditions in the pre-school programme. Traditions are being defined broadly to include daily living traditions of common people. The above analyses are one means of effectively incorporating such traditions in pre-school programmes.

The use of such home resources would severely reduce costs, immediately providing for effective replicability anywhere in the country, even in the most disadvantaged areas. This characteristic will be very significant in the contemplated quantitative expansion of programmes in many countries.

But cost is not the most significant factor.

Familiarity with the materials and events makes for a smooth transition

1/ For a more detailed analysis vide Ratnaike, J., Early Childhood Education through Home-Based Activities, Notes Comments... Series NS 94, Unit for Co-operation with UNICEF and WFP, Unesco, Paris (1981).

Competency Visual Discrimination:	Learning Activity Drawn from Home Learning Environment
- Ability to obtain meaning from visual symbols (visual reception)	- making outlines of common objects found in the home (utensils, farm implements, tools, etc.) (The outlines may be made on wet clay or sand); - identifying common objects, found in the home, from their outlines; - identifying shapes of common objects, from the home, made of clay; - identifying missing parts of common objects from the home, from shapes made of clay; - naming common objects, from the home, from their shadows; - various sorting exercises or activities as done in the home (sorting rice from sand and husk; sorting good fruit from bad fruit; sorting mature beans from immature beans, etc.).
- Ability to find hidden figures in pictures etc. (figure - ground discrimination)	- scanning for a bird or a fruit on a tree; - naming objects from a mixture of shadows.

Auditory Discrimination:

- Attention to particular sounds (auditory attention) and discriminating among sounds (auditory discrimination)

- identifying sounds generally found around the home (baby crying, rice boiling, coconut being scraped, cow being milked, etc.);
- relating the sounds above to the activity or function;
- rhythmic sound patterns in folk songs, chants;
- distinguishing high/low pitch, loudness/softness, etc., in the above sounds.

for the child from the home to the school.

The extension of the home equipment and events for the designed purposes of the development of competencies in children, provides opportunities for the continuation at home, of development inputs to the child, through the parents, at low cost, since no additional equipment is required and the parents are already competent in the home activities.

It provides the child with the possibility of viewing the now familiar home environment in terms of new developmental perspectives, a significant contribution in itself not only to the superior understanding of the child's environment, but more so to the potentiality of developing self-learning by the child.

In organizational terms, the use of home equipment and events generally does not require the teacher to spend time "constructing" learning/teaching aids, a major advantage over even low cost aids developed by the use of local materials.

(iii) Structuring in an Open Learning System

It is seemingly contradictory to consider structuring in an open learning pre-school situation. Yet the function of the facilitator is to generate a developmentally-oriented learning environment, which implies a perspective view of assisting the development of the child.

The development of the child is not merely a question of pure maturation. The pre-school is not merely to provide the child with a totally unstructured environment in which the child will, "by chance", interact and grow by using fortuitous learning

experiences. This is so even when the environemnt, though unstructured, is varied and rich. Hence the need for carefully unobstrusive structuring and sequencing so that the intended developmental outcomes will be ultimately achieved.

Formalized structuring has often totally ignored the fact that a great proportion of the most significant learning of the little child, especially in the home learning environment, takes place through interaction that is unpremeditated or indirect. A restrictive authoritarian concept of structure has often regimented little children into ones that provide only on-cue responses to predetermined demands. This has succeeded, unfortunately, in destroying the child's natural flow of action, exploration, independence, joy and creativity.

The structuring and sequencing do not at all mean that the children have now to be placed in rigid formations at desks and tables and "made to work". The current "victory" in many good preschools of having an impressively large amount of play as the basis of learning, has to be conserved.

The structuring on the other hand, needs to appear in the overall design, so that the facilitator, through these very play activities, assists the chaining of experiences in such a way that they move towards the intended learning outcomes of development.

Structuring and sequencing also do not mean "telling" the child the concepts that are to be acquired.

The child, at a very early age, begins with a percept or interpretation, by the brain, of stimuli received through the senses (though the interpretation may be approximate or inaccurate or crude).

Abstractions are made (to begin with intuitively or unconsciously), from these percepts and these are the "primitive" generalizations concerning the information received. Later, the child is able to exercise judgement, and consciously abstract generalizations from contact and interaction with the environment, and a concept is formed.

The facilitator can arrange the environment to assist in this process. But the child, alone, has to make the jump from percept to concept. Language, imagery, symbolization, trial and error manipulation and play, can assist in this transformation.

To assist in unobstrusively structuring learning episodes, a foundational premise has to be the nature and attributes of development of the child of pre-school age, for it is the development that is being facilitated by "exploiting" the open free play, exploratory and highly personalized actions of the child. Such a premise, for example, would involve the facilitator appreciating the characteristics[1/] manifested by a child of pre-school age who is at the sub-phases of intuitive

1/ Vide Taylor, J., The Foundations of Maths in the Infant School, UK, Unwin Education Books, (1976) for practical implications for pre-school learning of these developmental stages.

thought (about 1 1/2 to 4-5 years) and of pre-operational thought (about 4-5 to 6-7 years). The self-operational scenario of the child at age 3 years for example is expanding rapidly during this period, produced by and simultaneously resulting in, a greatly increased variety of interventions and actions, chiefly made possible by the enhanced psychomotor competence of the child.

The capacity for such expansion is in-built. The results further increase this capacity of the child, and imaginative play, interactions with objects and people, direct manipulative experience, all contribute to both the capacity and to the expansion. Early responsibility for relevant choices for action in this expansion supports independent constructive behaviour. This built-in capacity is also at the back of a young child's need to feel effective and competent.

It is against such a premise that the activities for direct learning by the child have to viewed and designed for, so that they contain opportunities for enhancing enabling competencies that would prepare, for example, for the movement of the child's development into the pre-operational thought phase from the intuitive thought phase. This implies opportunities for the continual process of adaptation. Equilibration in this respect may be viewed as the process of preparing for the next phase of development and the readiness for new experience.

The facilitator's responsibility in this context is to select, to juxtapose, to provide for, developmental activities for initiating growth in the various domains, and for reinforcing already established competencies in this direction. The structuring involves the creation of a learning environment for the child to obtain significant self-encounters that are self-selected by the child,

whenever possible, and which fit into the natural rhythm of activities of the child generated by the child's inate capacity for development. In such a structuring, the facilitator is not a fugleman but a manager who provides for learning opportunities to be available for the child to encounter. In such a structuring the self-motivation of the child to feel competent and able is not hampered.

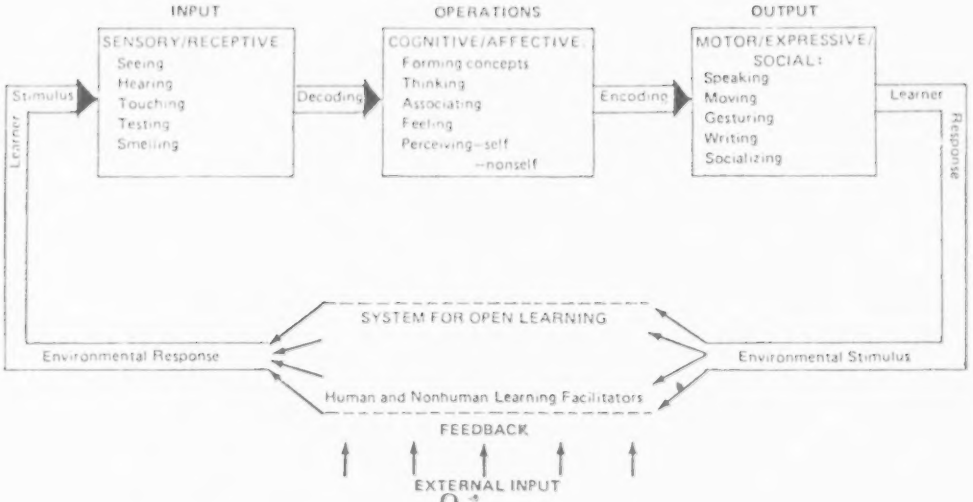
To prevent ad hocism in such a delicate balance between structure and openness, it has been found useful to have in mind some framework or model, even one that is held tentatively and subject to subsequent modification and adaptation as a result of field experience with children in real life scenarios.

One such model[1/] (merely as an example) which embodies both the aspects of structure and the aspects of openness is on page 75.

Openness is emphasized, as opposed to a rigid stimulus-response model, by ensuring that the environment is consciously kept as responsive as possible to the thinking and action that the child may manifest in response to the environmental inputs the child receives. Such an open environment could generate a variety of responses which would assist and stimulate the child and permit self-generalization in the child's learning.

Aside from incorporating openness, the model structures the steps in

1/ System for Open Learning Information - Processing Model, from Meier, J.H. and Marone, P.J., Facilitating Children's Development. A Systematic Guide to Open Learning, Univ. Park Press, Baltimore (1979).


INPUT
SENSORY/RECEPTIVE:
Seeing
Hearing
Touching
Testing
Smelling
OPERATIONS
COGNITIVE/AFFECTIVE:
Forming concepts
Thinking
Associating
Feeling
Perceiving—self
—nonself
OUTPUT
MOTOR/EXPRESSIVE/SOCIAL:
Speaking
Moving
Gesturing
Writing
Socializing
Stimulus
Decoding
Encoding
Learner
Learner
Response
SYSTEM FOR OPEN LEARNING
Environmental Response
Environmental Stimulus
Human and Nonhuman Learning Facilitators
FEEDBACK
EXTERNAL INPUT

learning as input - the sensory/receptive domain, the operations - the cognitive/affective/domain; and output - the motor/expressive/social domain. Each of these domains focuses upon important components of information processing for learning purposes. Further, the model emphasizes the importance of feedback and this may emanate naturally from the consequences of the child's actions on materials and equipment and/or from the facilitator. Through this means, the learning environment provides for the learning to be self-correcting. Thus the model implicitly supports self-motivation, while retaining the practical reality that, at times, extrinsic motivation or reinforcement generated by the human facilitator may indeed be necessary. The facilitator and the non-human materials make up the total responsive environment for the learning child.

A further aspect of structuring implies that the facilitator has usually to keep in mind at least five operational design dimensions, in developing learning episodes that fit into the open learning environment.

The entry behaviours of the child have to be taken account of on a child-by-child basis so that a match may be made between what the child can do prior to the entry into the learning episode, and what may be anticipated as a result of the learning episode.

The materials, equipment, procedures and tactics for using the learning episode have to be established. The results expected in the behaviour of the child after mastering the learning episode have also to be identified.

Finally, where the child may proceed next in the developmental sequence has to be recognized. This acts as the bridge into subsequent learning episodes. Having done all these, the learning has still to remain open and exploration based.

There is little doubt that this aspect of the subtle balance between structure and openness requires a high level of sensitivity and skill on the part of the facilitator, based upon the facilitator's intimate knowledge of the manner in which each child functions.

(iv) Intrinsic Motivation

Common forms of motivation used to "interest" children in learning are "other-initiated", in which rewards, and sometimes punishments, provided by others, are used to motivate the learner. *The alternative option is self-initiation where self-motivation is the primary stimulus.*

It is useful to consider the implications of these two types of strategies in terms of their processes and outcomes, so that curriculum designers (and correspondingly teacher educators) have analyzed options to select from in the specifications for the curriculum and instructional systems.

The research on these two types of strategies, has a long history.[1/] However, while some doubts were raised regarding the ultimate pedagogical validity of extrinsic motivation, on personality and other development dimensions, these earlier theorists essentially questioned the interaction of the different forms of motivation. The specification of the exact nature of this interaction, and its implications, have begun to appear in the researchers in the last decade.[2/]

These more recent studies have pointed to several disturbing aspects of relying exclusively on extrinsic motivation. The following are examples of the conclusions:

- Offer of external rewards prior to understanding a task, appears to lower the subsequent interest in the task. It is not the reward per se that effects subsequent interest, but the timing of the reward, and whether it is expected or not.
- Both contingent and non-contingent external rewards had the effect of undermining future interest.

1/ For example, Festinger, L., and Carlsmith, J.M., 1959, Cognitive consequences of forced compliance, Jn. Abnormal and Social Psychology, 58, 203-210; Carlsmith, J.M., Collins, B.E., and Helmreich, R.G., 1966, Studies in forced compliance I.; pressure for compliance on attitude change produced by face-to-face role playing and anonymous essay writing, Jn. Personality and Social Psychology, 4, 1-13; Zanna, M.P., Lepper, M.R., and Abelson, R.P., 1973, Attentional mechanisms in children's devaluation of a forbidden activity in a forced compliance situation, Jn. Personality and Social Psychology, 3, 355-359.

2/ For example, Deci, E.L., 1975, Intrinsic motivation, NY: Plenum Press; Lepper, M.R., and Greene, D., 1975, Turning play into work! Effects of adult surveillance and extrinsic rewards on children's intrinsic motivation, Jn. Personality and Social Psychology, 31, 479-486.

- A reward offer appears to lower the quality of performance on the task itself, although activity may increase.

- The effect of keeping the anticipated reward in front of the learner during the activity, undermined the actual performance. The more salient the reward, the more the undermining of performance.

- Recognized surveillance tends to have the effect of undermining the development of poorly learned skills, such as at the initiatory stage of learning (but facilitates the performance of well learned skills).

- In regard to the process of learning, rewarded learners attempted easier problems, and required more information before they achieved a correct solution (i.e. inefficient), than non-rewarded learners. Learners who believed they would be evaluated by an external source, chose easier problems, and were more answer oriented, than those who believed they would evaluate their own problems. This reward seems to generate different strategic activities in the learners. Extrinsic rewards seem to cause a reduction of exploration.

- In child-to-child teaching, the tutor's behaviour towards the tutee was different when rewards were offered to the tutor. An obstrusive and negative style of teaching was adopted and there was greater impatience in response to frustration, as compared to the no-reward situation. The younger learners taught by tutors in the reward condition scored lower for task ability and higher for number of errors than did learners taught by tutors in the no-reward condition. When the actions of one person (the learner) may interfere with an extrinsic goal (reward) of another (tutor), a negative evaluation of the task

is translated into a negative evaluation of the person (learner). The tutor, in the reward situation, seems to value the learner in terms of the function of her ability to obtain the desired goal (reward) and devalued her in proportion to the degree of which she failed, and thus frustrated the tutor's goal.

Among the most disturbing conclusions of the above researches, that have implications for the learning situation, are that:

- while intrinsic motivation supports self-initiated learning, extrinsic motivation tends to subordinate this and converts learning into "other-initiated";
- when external rewards are offered, they change the nature and definition of the task, as well as the strategies used, and eventually diminish the learner's control of the learning situation; and
- when external rewards are provided, there seems to be a subsequent loss of interest in the task as well as a lowered quality of performance, although the amount of activity may increase.

However, the same incentives when given in a manner unanticipated by the learners, seem to produce no such undermining effects. It is likely that the context created by the offer of rewards and not the rewards themselves that is responsible for these findings.

While it may be argued in terms of the above findings that extrinsic rewards may have detrimental effects in educational settings, its implications for the learning situation must also reckon with whether the child can, in practice, be intrinsically motivated, and has the

capacities to carry out what she is intrinsically motivated to do. If this is not a reality, then extrinsic rewards may be the only option available.

There have been a number of investigations, including those of Piaget, which point strongly to the fact that children are intrinsically interested in detecting and constructing regularities or patterns in the world around them. Children also intrinsically concern themselves about explanations for the underlying mechanisms or processes by which events or outcomes are generated. This leads to the practical step of mobilizing the children's intrinsic motivation by allowing children who are attempting to solve non-routine problems, to explore the problem situation as an end in itself without simultaneously requiring them to keep the goal or end product in mind. It is precisely this kind of exploration that seems to be undermined by extrinsic rewards. Several studies, done over the last decade,[1/] and continuing today, emphasize how important such exploration is, in achieving correct solutions to non-routine problems. The studies also show that children are adequately motivated to engage themselves enthusiastically in this sort of exploration, and are capable of benefitting from it. The periods of exploration in which the goal seems to be shunted out may not only be "natural" to children, but may also facilitate their learning.

1/ Such as, Koslowski, B., and Brunner, J.S., 1972, Learning to use a lever, Child Development, 43, 790-799; Sibulkin, A.E., and Uzgins, I.C., 1976, Imitation by pre-schoolers in a problem-solving situation, Jn. Genetic Psychol., 132 267-275; Siegler, R.S., and Liebert, R.M., 1974, Effects of contiguity, regularity, and age on children's casual inferences, Developmental Psychology, 10, 574-579.

Both these sets of studies, on the negative effects of external motivation including the reduction of internal motivation, and the evidence of the availability of intrinsic motivation in children, must lead practitioners and designers to re-examine carefully the automatic use of task extrinsic rewards. Children may well be more sophisticated learners than they have been given credit for, particularly in the processes of what appears to be an innate tendency of children, and a genuine interest in, making "sense" out of their environment. Instead of relying on external rewards to motivate children, this tendency may be mobilized and exploited, and supported by providing the children with the kinds of information and opportunities that would maximize this intrinsic interest in learning.

Such a reconsideration of the reward system in the learning situation, is especially important in the context of objectives such as those which attempt to make children independent, self-sufficient and self-reliant.

(v) Language Development

The overwhelming importance of language development in pre-school education is now widely accepted. Language deprivation is one of the significant deficit features in the home learning environment of the disadvantaged.

The training of facilitators requires special attention to this area. A range of practical competencies may be

developed in the facilitators, starting with relatively simple techniques, to ones more sophisticated, depending upon the target population being trained. Examples of such techniques are indicated below.

Oral language development may be "programmed" through a step-wise learning sequence such as the following:

- at the *enumeration* level,
  (in which the child merely enumerates items in a real life scene or a picture being viewed);
- at the *description* level,
  (in which the child undertakes descriptions of the items enumerated. The degree of detail of the discription will vary with the situation and the phase of development);
- at the *association* level,
  (in which the child retrieves from her mind similar items or situations and indicates the criteria for association);
- at the *interpretation* level,
  (in which the child provides explanations or extrapolations or intrapolations, derived from the cues in what is being viewed);
- at the *evaluation* level,
  (in which the child judges against internal or external criteria what is being viewed or items in what is being viewed).

Here these processes are applied, through oral language, to real life scenes or events or to pictures, posters or charts from every day life viewed by the child. Such a sequence may be played as a game to deformalize the "programming". The "game" may be played with mixed groups of children

and adults (grandfathers and grandmothers), with the older generation filling in especially the higher order categories, thereby "interposing" adult models into the learning situation and "simulating" an important element in the home learning environment, in the pre-school learning situation.

A second aspect relates to using oral language for creating a learning environment that will enhance specific components of cognitive growth, so that the above techniques of developing verbal abilities may be pervasively applied to and superimposed upon mental processes such as the following:

- *Identifying and verbalizing, when necessary, patterns of various kinds, using all the senses, and moving from patterns in events from patterns with objects. This would support competencies in generalization.*
- *Identifying and verbalizing about situations which involve "when", "because", "if/then", leading to enhanced competencies in cause/effect relationships.*
- *Identifying and using symbolizations in regard to objects, events, functions, which would support competencies in abstracting.*

A third aspect relates to the development of effective and true dialogue between the child and the teacher, rather than only one-way talk or question and response on teacher initiated topics. Often these responses remain at the level of labelling or factual recall.

In this respect, the variety of well-known uses that children and adults make of spoken language, could form one criterion axis for designing improvements. Such an approach also illustrates a practical way in which linguistic

research may be mobilized for enhancing quality in pre-school education. Among the common uses that may be considered are the following:

- *Maintaining self* (such as expressing personal needs; protecting self; justifying personal claims and behaviour; criticizing or threatening others).
- *Directing action* (such as of oneself; of class; collaborating with others in action).
- *Reporting* (such as on the past or the present; labelling components for a scenario or event; detailing these components of a scenario or event; detailing these components, or sequences of events or related aspects; reflecting on the experiences including feelings).
- *Reasoning* (such as explaining a process or cause and effect relationships; identifying problems and solutions; justifying judgements and actions; drawing conclusions; indicating priorities).
- *Predicting* (such as anticipating and forecasting events, their details and sequences; indicating potential problems and their solutions, and alternative courses of action).
- *Projecting* (such as seeing into experiences, and feelings and reactions of others; into situations never experienced before).
- *Imagining* (such as developing hypothetical or imaginary situations based on real life or on fantasy; or an original story).

The designer of learning episodes can now ask which of these uses are present in children at a particular stage of development and which may need initiation or further development.

A second axis for the designing of improvement could be the various strategies a facilitator may adopt to guide a child to undertake the selected uses in the child's spoken language, assuming that as the immature child speaker becomes more competent, he or she will manifest, or be expected to manifest, greater use of directing action, reporting, reasoning, predicting, projecting and imagining (which require higher orders of mental operations than merely stating physical needs).

This second axis may include strategies such as the following (these now derived from pedagogical research on language teaching and learning[1/]), which cover initiating dialogue, through to closing a dialogue in such a way that the final speech event leaves the child encouraged and satisfied and in a state of motivation to pursue further dialogue at a later time with the facilitator and with others:

- *Orienting strategies* which set the child thinking about a particular topic or theme and invites or "entices" the child to respond, in a number of ways including reasoning and predicting, and extend the talking in a given context.
- *Enabling strategies* which extend the orientation in ways such as the following:
  - i. *follow-through strategies* which follow through, further, the direction the child has chosen, prompting the child to give more details or explanations or justifications by asking such questions as how? why?;
  - ii. *focusing strategies*, which identify for the child's attention, a selected essential feature which may have been missed by the child;
  - iii. *checking strategies*, which assist the child to think again or fill in information needed or omitted.

1/ Tide Tough, J., Talking and Learning, Schools Council Communication Skills in Early Childhood Project, U.K., Ward Lock Educational (1977).

- *Informing strategies*, which help to extend the dialogue in ways such as the following:

  i. *cueing strategies*, which prompt the child with selected items of information, to catalyze a particular direction of movement of expansion in the dialogue;

  ii. *increasing data base strategies*, which provide the child with additional relevant and timely information and is one vehicle for the teacher's contribution to the interpretation and expansion being built up in the dialogue.

- *Sustaining strategies*, which support the progress the child is making during the dialogue, in ways such as the following:

  i. *reinforcement strategies*, which provide positive feedback to the child of her achievement and of the attention of the teacher to what the child is saying (Good! Is that so!);

  ii. *fixing strategies*, which provide for summarizing and establishing what has been achieved thus far during the dialogue.

- *Concluding strategies*, which gently close a dialogue leaving a feeling of satisfaction and recognition with the child. The concluding strategies may also be used to end one topic and start another with a new orientation strategy.

These two framework axes (the former derived from research on linguistics and speech events, and the latter on the pedagogy of teaching language), may be combined to design dialogue learning events for the children.

The following illustrates a brief example of the use of these two framework axes in developing a dialogue learning sequence for a four-year old rural child:

An Example of a Dialogue Learning Sequence
(From an event in fantasy play of a child)

(Context: Sir Lanka
Original Language: Sinhala)

T - Tell me how did you make your vegetable sambol?[1]	Orienting
C - I cut it like this.	
T - Oh! You cut it. What did you cut?	Enabling: checking
C - The (gotukola[2]) leaves.	
T - Very good! How did you cut the (gotukola) leaves?	Sustaining; Enabling; follow through
C - I took a knife and cut.	
T - Where did you put the leaves to cut? On your hand?	Enabling: checking
C - No! Ha! Ha! Not on my hand!	
T - Then where did you place them?	Enabling: follow through
C - On this wood and cut.	
T - You mean on the chopping board?	Informing: increasing data base
C - Yes, on the chopping board. Then I cut small pieces like this.	

1/ Sambol, here is a spicy salad made of leaves, onions, etc.

2/ Gotukola is a leafy vegetable.

T - Very good! That way you won't cut your hand! Now what are these white pieces?	Sustaining: reinforcing
C - Coconut.	Enabling: focusing
T - Did you cut the coconut the way you cut the leaves?	Enabling: checking
C - No! No! Ha! Ha! I used the coconut scraper like this. You don't cut coconut for a sambol. You scrape coconut.	
T - Yes, you are right! We scrape coconut for a sambol on a coconut scraper.	Sustaining: reinforcing
C - Yes, scrape coconut on a coconut scraper.	
T - Show me how you scraped the coconut too.	Enabling; follow through Sustaining: reinforcing
C - Like this!	
T - Very good! You are a skilled cook. So you placed your palms on the coconut and moved the coconut over the teeth of the scraper did you?	Sustaining: reinforcing Enabling: focusing Enabling: checking
C - Yes over the teeth of the scraper.	
T - Which of your palms is holding the coconut? Your left palm or your right palm?	Enabling: checking
C - Oh! Which palm? I don't know.	

T - Stop and see! Is your eating palm[1/] holding the coconut?	Enabling: follow through Informing: cueing
C - Yes, the eating palm.	
T - So your eating palm, the right palm, is holding the coconut.	Sustaining: fixing
C - Yes, the eating palm.	
T - The right palm is holding the coconut.	Informing: increasing data base Sustaining: fixing
C - The right palm.	
T - What is on top of the right palm?	Enabling: focusing Sustaining: fixing
C - The other palm.	
T - Yes, the other palm. The left palm. You placed your right palm on the coconut and your left palm on your right palm.	Informing: increasing data base Sustaining: fixing
C - Left palm on the right palm.	
T - So you have made a tasty vegetable sambol for your baby. She must be hungry. You can feed her now after you wash your hands.	Sustaining: fixing Concluding
C - Yes, feed the baby.	

However, it should be emphasized that the above dimensions, of uses and strategies, can only suggest hints as to what a facilitator may do towards developing skills of effective communication in the child, and extending thinking and the

1/ "Eating palm or hand" - so called to distinguish the right from the left as the left hand is never to be used for eating in Oriental cultures.

use of langauge. They do not cover the number of complex variables which appear in a given interaction with the child, that the facilitator has to be sensitive to. For example, even if the facilitator is conscious of the maturity level of the child and is concerned about understanding the child at her own level, the child is probably unable to conceive of her corresponding role of understanding the teacher, a relationship that is a vital prerequisite for effective dialogue.

Especially in disadvantaged homes, such developmental dialogue is rarely found and is even discouraged. There is often a tendency for these children to shy away from adults who wish to draw them into developmental conversation.

A preliminary step in these cases would be to establish sufficient rapport to make the child feel that what the child says is important for the facilitator. Similarly, the facilitator has to establish the recognition in the child that what the facilitator says is interesting to the child and encourages and satisfies the child.

Even then, the immaturity of the child and its inability, because of egocentricity, to project into the facilitator's intended meanings, would still provide difficulties in developing dialogue, as would the dichotomy between "child logic" and "adult logic".

The facilitator has to be able to project into the child's world of inability to transcend egocentricity, of child logic, of the inability to value another viewpoint, if successful and

development dialogue is to proceed. The facilitator has also to identify the stage of use of language of the child, so that development towards new uses may be attempted.

(vi) Chaining Prerequisites

In the highly condensed training programme, special attention needs to be paid to concepts that have *intrinsic learning difficulties* for the child, especially those which are *abstract*. These would need to be identified and particular learning sequences developed. For this purpose, it is very frequently necessary for the child to build up a number of prerequisites prior to learning the concept itself, and chain these into the sequence of learning the concept.

The following illustrates one example of a portion of design process by which such a chained sequence may be developed - for the highly abstract concept of time.1/

> Very often time, in the mind of the little child, is related to speed. Time does not have an existence of its own. Speed itself, in the mind of the young child, is frequently related to the idea of ordering of events, but without sensitivity to time intervals. Also, distance and duration have not entered the schema of the little child as yet. The "visual passing", or the "simultaneously arriving", or having similar end points, are what are perceived. So the result of a time-related event, is what the child's mind emphasizes at this stage. Even then, the little child can take into account only one activity at a time, and cannot

1/ This does not imply formal teaching. The activities indicated could well be play activities, and the mode of "teaching" dialogue undertaken during the course of play.

co-ordinate an event in one activity (made up of several events), with an event in another activity (also made up of several events).

The sequence of learning for gradually developing a concept of time, requires a number of prerequisites, such as learning how to order events which take place with the passage of time. The learning cannot jump into 'static time' (e.g. 8 o'clock), even if this time relates to well-experienced events such as eating lunch or sleeping. The 'label' may be given, without a concept of time.

There is an immediate and corresponding language competence required for this development, such as words relating to ordering on a time base (e.g. "today", "tomorrow", "yesterday", "now", "before", "after, "then").

A number of activities may have to be done by the child, to focus on the idea of order (time seriation), such as by taking, at a time, two events of a series (preferably adjacent for easy recall), e.g. event (i): cutting an orange (in half); event (ii): then cutting it into smaller pieces; event (iii): placing the small pieces, with the skin outwards, in the mouth; event (iv): biting and sucking the pips, etc.

After several examples of this kind, (which the child actually performs) with events, activities and objects familiar to the child, the learning may shift to such events, activities and objects from the past experiences of the child such as from the home learning environment, e.g. as cooking, washing clothes, going to the temple. Following on this, "contrived" situations may be used for experience, such as filling sand into a tin up to a series of marks. Finally, the child may be provided a "home" assignment to report back on the following day, examples of time seriation observed by the child, in the home or farm.

A start may also be made regarding "time intervals" such as with "Have we got to wait longer to peel a banana or to husk a coconut?" "Does it take longer to eat a banana or a peanut?" This aspect may be symbolized with signs like ———— (long); —— (short), and the signs used on events of an activity with time intervals for some events that are long and others that are short, such as for the activity of cooking vegetables: event (i): plucking out dead leaves ——; event (ii): washing vegetables ——; event (iii): cutting vegetables into small pieces ————; event (iv): putting into pot ——; event (v): adding water ——; event (vi): adding curry powder ——; event (vii): adding coconut milk ——; event (viii): cooking ————. Thus the entire activity may be symbolized as "waiting long time" ———— or "waiting short time" —— in the sequence of the events involved.

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CHAPTER V

THE FAMILY AS PARTNERS IN PRE-SCHOOL EDUCATION

The ancestral learning systems, generally, provided for little separation between family living, and learning. Much of this harmony has been lost over time, and attempts have been initiated in many countries to re-establish a dynamic and constructive relationship between the family and the education system.

Community participation is actively encouraged and parent-teacher associations have begun to function actively in most countries. Even if some of the bureaucratic motivations for the renewed emphasis may have come from the need to reduce the costs of education delivery systems, educationists and sociologists have raised their voice about reducing the current stress and trauma that children suffer in the transition between the home and the school, especially in the extensive disadvantaged areas; about making the education systems accountable to the parents and the community to whom the children belong; and about mobilizing the untapped human, material and cultural resources in the home and community, for educating the children in the nationally established education system.

The importance of the family as partners especially in the pre-school education effort may be argued for from another direction - that of continuity of intervention on behalf of the children.

The conditions for learning to occur have probably had as much attention paid to it at various levels of education as any area. The classical work of Gagne[1/] has been widely accepted in the design of learning sequences.

> *In particular, practice and reinforcement are vital conditions for effective learning, and continuity in this respect is undoubtedly provided its due recognition in its contribution to superior learning. These general principles apply to all learning, by learners of all ages, including learners of pre-school age. No doubt, on a "short-term" basis, which represents the period of time spent in the pre-school, the various learning episodes provide practice and reinforcement.*

The importance of continuity over longer periods of time has been highlighted from a new direction of longitudinal investigations on pre-school education. Since the 1970s[2/] an increasing number of studies have pointed to the fact that there is little evidence for long lasting effects of early intervention at pre-school. Even earlier than these investigations, data[3/] had been available that pointed to the lack of high correlation between adult status predictions, and indicators derived from early childhood of the same subjects.

1/ For example, Gagne, R.M., 1965, Conditions of Learning, NY: Holt Rinehart and Winston, Inc.

2/ For example, Brofenbrenner, U., 1975, "Is early intervention effective"? In J. Hellmuth (Ed), Exceptional children, Vol. 3, NY: Brunner/Mazel.

3/ MacFarlane, J.W., 1963, From infancy to adulthood, Childhood Education, 39, 336-342.

At a recent international meeting[1/] on the prevention of school failure, and the relationship between preschool and primary education, the following conclusions were made:

> "The research findings on the effects of early psychological stimulation on child development indicate that, in the short term, this type of intervention promotes some aspects of the child's development. However, these effects have not proven to be stable as time goes on. There is not sufficient evidence that the positive short-term effects are maintained once the intervention is ended, and the child is once more exposed to his or her natural environment.
>
> These findings strengthen the assertion, already accepted among researchers in the child development area, that the process of child development is plastic and vulnerable to environmental conditions. Children, therefore, respond considerably to environmental conditions favourable to their development, but, at the same time, this process is halted or deteriorates under deficient environmental conditions..."

What the longitudinal studies have indicated essentially is that the earlier simplistic views on preschool education extrapolated from the well-known work of Bloom[2/] and Hunt[3/], have to change fundamentally. These views rested on assumptions such as the following:

- children's growth and development can be modified significantly in a variety of directions;
- the earlier a plausible intervention is made, the better;

1/ Workshop on Pre-School Research, held in Bogota, Colombia, 1981; Report, Preventing School Failure: The Relationship Between Pre-School and Primary Education, IDRC, Ottawa, Canada (1983) (p. 123).

2/ Bloom, B.J., 1964, Stability and Change in Human Characteristics, NY: Wiley.

3/ Hunt, J. McV, 1969, The Challenge of Incompetence and Poverty, Urbana Ill: Univ. of Illinois Press.

- the manipulation of early experience will influence subsequent psychological functioning positively or negatively, and the development is cumulative;
- the provision of qualitatively valid experience can neutralize and compensate for basic lacks in the learner's environment;
- learners who fail to reap the benefits of planned intervention are likely to develop in ways that are counter productive.

The evidence suggest that whereas the earlier views based upon the above assumptions tended to consider pre-school education as essentially or tacitly a sufficient condition for subsequent superior performance, the current evidence suggests that pre-school intervention is a necessary but not a sufficient condition.

The degree to which early intervention experiences continue to influence subsequent performance seems to depend upon the mechanisms ensuring the continuity of these early interventions in amount, intensity and duration.1/ The degree of continuity of influence also seems to depend upon the potency of the environment in which the learner is currently functioning.2/ Only when early intervention initiates a cumulative sequence can long-term predictability be expected.

Continuity has, thereby, been enriched beyond short-term continuity referred to traditionally under the

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1/ For example, Zigler, E., 1977 "The Effectiveness of Head Start, Another Look" (paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Psychological Association).

2/ Kagan, J. and Klein, R.E., 1973, Cross Cultural Perspectives of Early Development, Am. Psychologist, 28, 947-962.

conditions of learning. For example, WITHOUT ADEQUATE FAMILY INVOLVEMENT, THE EARLY INTERVENTION IS NOT LIKELY TO HAVE LONG LASTING EFFECTS

> *Family involvement may not be solely in terms of direct interventions. Expectations and ease of transition, and continuity between the home and the pre-school (and subsequently between the home and the school) seem to be equally important. The sharply defined separation between the pre-school and the home, each functioning as detached independent systems would not contribute to the long lasting effects. Unfortunately, in a great deal of instances, the highest parent pre-school interaction takes place at the time parents leave or pick up the children.* 1/ *This is of course totally incufficient.*

The intersection has to be much more carefully defined and broadened, which would then involve the consideration of parental education as well.

The training of facilitators requires this aspect to be considered, not so much from a "theoretical" framework, but from one from which various degrees of parental and family participation may be practicable. These degrees may vary from teams of mothers, grandmothers, grandfathers, brothers, sisters and any other members of the traditional home child caring network, directly participating at different times in the work of the pre-school in a large variety of possible roles; to such home child care personnel merely being acquainted with what happens during the period

1/ For example, Powell, D.R., 1977, The Co-ordination of Pre-School Socialization: Parent Care-Giver Relationships in Day Care Settings, paper presented at the Society for Research in Child Development Meeting, New Orleans.

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the child is in pre-school;[1/] to active roles in systematic education of the child in the home, following up on adequate parental education.

In some developing countries where a heavy motivation has come from programmes for the emancipation of women and where large numbers of women have joined the working population together with the men, traumatic contradictions for the child between the home and the pre-school have already arisen. The dedicated pre-school facilitator knows the children much better than the parents do.

Both for parental education and for continuing co-operation, when possible, the involvement of parents directly in pre-school activities as assistants to the facilitator has helped significantly in the parents understanding their own children and how they grow and develop. This step, naturally, needs to be taken gently and slowly for there are many barriers to be overcome, such as lack of time, of feeling of incompetence by the parents in disadvantaged circumstances.

At the beginning, the parents involved in the day-to-day chores of the pre-school are likely to see only fragments of the total picture of the developmental intervention contemplated. This also indicates the need for specially designed non-formalized sessions for parental education, which could analyse the day-to-day experiences into a holistic picture of both the development patterns of the children and of the interventions designed to support the development.

1/ A variety of incentives such as income generating activities, literacy programmes, cultural programmes sited at or near the pre-school premises have been used successfully to motivate such persons to attend and continue to attend.

To begin with, the parents may be provided with small defined physical tasks that need to be done to help the children play safely and joyfully, such as (for block building):

- assist the child only when the child really needs the help and avoid building for the child;
- help children be aware of other children building near them to avoid accidental toppling;
- help children respect each other's work;
- help children put away the blocks neatly and systematically but do not put away the blocks on behalf of the child.

The parent, especially one that has a pre-school child in the class, when she is acting as an assistant, may need a few other practical hints to begin with, such as the following:

- *building a friendly and understanding relationship with all children in the class, accepting a child as he or she is, so that the child can also accept the parent (of another child in the class) as a responsive person;*
- *giving directions may be limited to the essentials;*
- *making sure the child understands what is being told to her by gaining her attention first and making certain the words used are simple and clearly spoken, and giving only one direction at a time to a child;*
- *timeliness of an action needs to be looked at from a child's point of view so that if a change of activity of the child is required, this may be suggested ahead of time, as immediate stopping of the earlier activity cannot be expected.*

These are indeed the kinds of practical hints that young facilitators acquire in training and through practical experience. They are even more important in the case of the

mother-assistant who may still retain and carry over her "authority" figure she is used to in her own home and with her own children. What the above illustrates is that among the many hints mother-assistants may be provided, the first ones may be selective, and may focus upon removing the anticipated authoritarian stance that a mother may take. After such hints have been used and discussed, other "pedagogically" focused hints may be added to match the various learning interventions contemplated in the pre-school.

Under the section on investigations that may be undertaken by trainee facilitators, the use of home equipment and events for child development has been referred to. This exercise itself would form a base for subsequent parental education and education of other personnel involved in caring for children, to extend the education at a pre-school into feasible forms of home-based pre-school education.

The above aspects, if they are to be implemented by and through facilitators at pre-schools, would require corresponding competencies to be developed in these facilitators. The methodology, as with other components of training, must need to be field and practice based, with the highly selected theoretical considerations providing the rationale, explanation and validity for the practices.